THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

Vol. 10 Winter · 1940-1941 No. 1

Editorial	*Alvin Johnson*
The Conflict Among Catholics	*George N. Shuster*
Impression of Ireland	*Irwin Edman*
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The Painter Sees the World	*Jean Charlot*
Life as the Guide of Philosophy	*Roscoe Pound*

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WINTER · 1940-1941 VOLUME 10 · No. 1

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PHI · BETA · KAPPA

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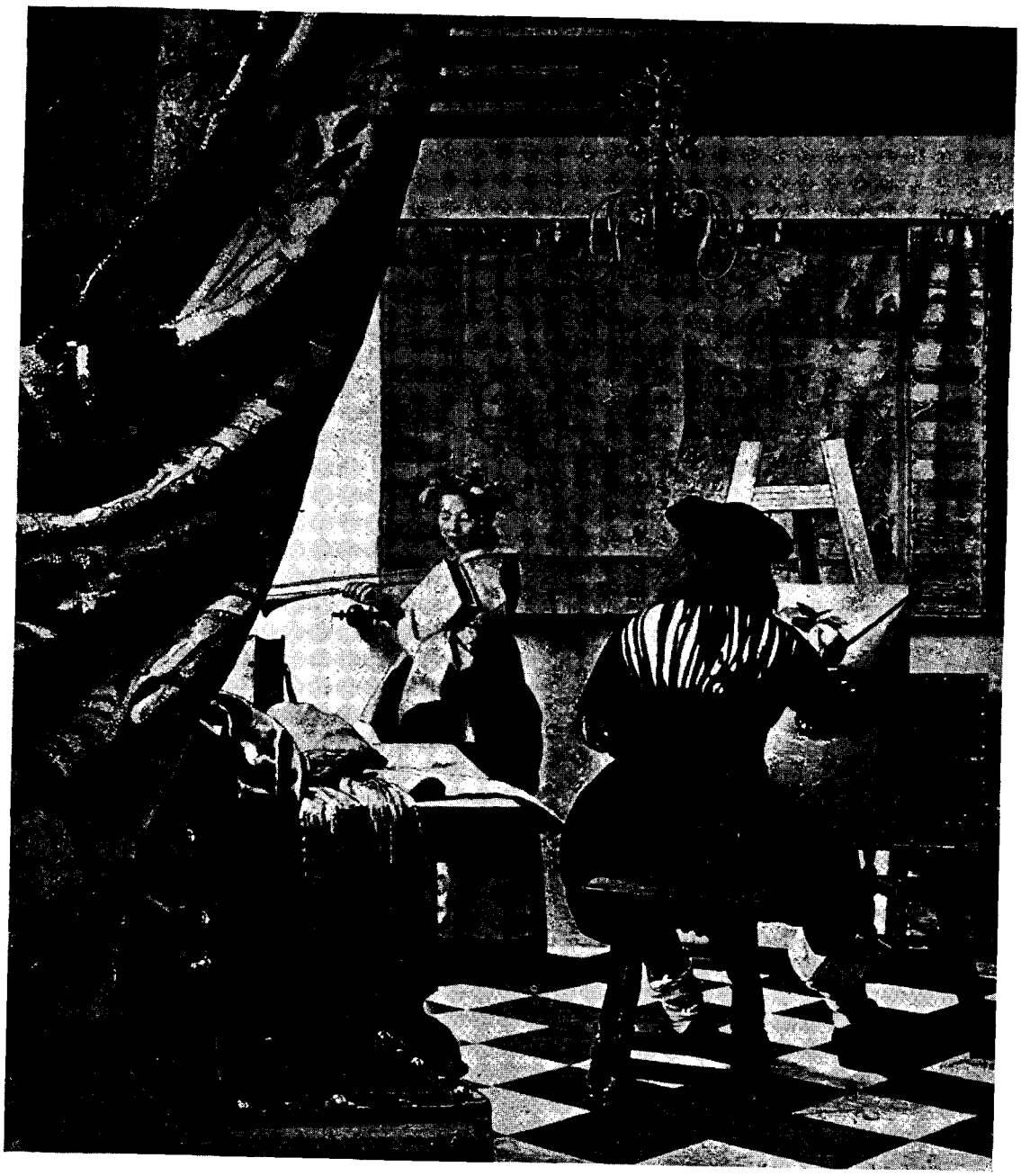

JAN VERMEER
1632-1675
"The Painter's Art"

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Editorial

ALVIN JOHNSON

When Plato wrote his *Republic* revolutionary forces were storming through the whole of Greek life. But the only revolution one encounters in the pages of the *Republic* is the revolution of mind. So Cicero, composing his Tusculan Disputations with the Rome he loved crashing about his head, held himself consistently within the serene realm of thought.

Future historians, delving in the documents of our present troubled time, will find limited evidence of the same kind of aloofness to the events of the day. They will find this evidence in the works of the pure scientists, in physics, chemistry, physiology, geography, anthropology. They will not find it in philosophy, ethics, sociology, criticism, the fields to which the classical scholar fled for serenity. Therefore they will not find it in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. In the present issue we deal with Liberalism, the Farm Problem, the Conflict among Catholics, the Near East, "Chinese Universities on the March." On the side of serenity we do indeed present the inquiry, "When Will the Poets Speak?", "Understanding Poetry," "The Painter Sees the World," "Impression of Ireland" and "Life as the Guide of Philosophy." Note the shift, however, from "Philosophy as the Guide of Life," traditional Phi Beta Kappa motto.

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The scholar in declining Greece or Rome could see no hope in the world of practical affairs. The Greek city-state of Plato's day, the Roman republic of Cicero's youth, had lost their vitality. They continued only as empty forms. Plato and Cicero had virtually written off the practical world. We have not. However desperate the condition of Europe, we cling to the faith that in a decade, a generation, a century, Europe will again be found building on the foundations of the old civilization. Moreover, we have an intensified feeling of obligation to defend the civilized way of living in our own continent.

Hence we cannot maintain serenity of mood. We must attempt to relate our thought to the events of the day. We must propagandize, in a remote and scholarly manner, to be sure. We must justify our propaganda, as somehow more valid intellectualism.

And yet this fact that the scholar has been drawn into the struggle of political forces cannot be regarded with complacency. What we think about Hitler and Stalin, Roosevelt and Willkie, the farm problem and the labor problem, though it may be fresh today will very soon grow musty. That is not true of our thinking about the quantum principle, the Gestalt psychology, ethics, the religious nature of man. It is not true of anthropological discoveries, of archeological explorations.

Perhaps when the Second World War recedes into history we shall return to the traditional mood of the scholar, devoted to learning and teaching, little concerned about the question whether what he learns has any other value except truth; whether what he teaches counts for anything but the recruitment of other soldiers of the truth. Perhaps we shall once more affirm the right of scholarship, a minority right to be sure, but one of the most cherished by those who invoke it. For what other right assures us equally sustained happiness, lifts us above the many mischances that beset even the most peaceful life?

A good time is coming when the reader of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR will turn to it in vain for the latest in ephemeral thought. He will find instead ideas of enduring value.

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The Conflict Among Catholics

GEORGE N. SHUSTER

BLITZKRIEG as Adolf Hitler wages it is something more than war. It is a deed of violence which brings processes of infiltration, division and perversion to their conclusions. No country in the world, no society, no group of citizens, can now boast that it has avoided corrosion by the acid of Nazi ideology. This startling fact becomes peculiarly evident when one observes what has been happening inside the normally solid and unyielding structure of the Catholic Church. It was the pious and aristocratic Franz von Papen who helped Hitler into the saddle; it is Monsignor Tiso who, more than any other man, is responsible for the fact that the swastika was hoisted over Czechoslovakia. These are familiar instances. Fewer people realize that here in the United States, where the dynamism of Hitler has also left its mark, Catholics are possibly as much affected as any other group. This is quite understandable since they are associated with a world-wide organization the fortunes and history of which deeply concern them. In what follows I shall try to discuss this phenomenon as objectively as possible. The reader will, I hope, prefer analysis to partisanship.

Those who take the trouble to study Catholic opinion as reflected in weekly and monthly periodicals will quickly discover that however radically the editors may differ they nearly always concur in asserting that their opinions on each and every subject are unimpeachable because deduced from Papal Encyclicals. Herein this journalism is notably distinct from the Catholic literature of ten or twenty years ago. Then orthodoxy was taken for granted. There was a corpus of doctrine and of dogma to which every writer automatically subscribed and what lay beyond that was frankly conceded to be private opinion. Thus some reputable Catholic journals upheld the suffragist move-

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ment, advocated total abstinence and maintained a critical attitude toward certain prevalent catechetical methods. Such opinions were by no means the dominant ones but nobody suspected those who entertained them of laxity or heresy. Today, however, the interpretation of current European developments, the critique of actions taken by the government of the United States, and the evaluation of men in public life are no longer enterprises in which one can engage with impunity. You must come up with a bouquet of quotations from Papal writings if you would ascend the rostrum to attack or defend the New Deal. And the more lumbering and amateurish you are the more vociferously you will proclaim a monopoly of the truth.

The situation thus outlined is most clearly manifested in the periodical literature which has grown up around the Jewish question. On the one hand Father Coughlin and the *Brooklyn Tablet* have openly endorsed and applauded anti-Semitism, though both have resorted to subterfuges adjudged adequate to dispel suspicion of open and flagrant contradiction of Pope Pius XI, whose opposition to racism is too well remembered to require exposition. On the other hand *Voice*, published by Professor Emanuel Chapman and his associates, is an outspokenly philo-Semitic journal in which Coughlinism is vehemently deplored and attacked. The editors quite correctly appeal to the authority of the Popes in support of their position, but often forget when the polemics wax hot that an opinion, however well founded, is not automatically a dogmatic utterance. There are some few periodicals which resemble *Voice*. But a very considerable number of Catholic journals have been tinged with anti-Semitism. The remarks of various editors on the appointment of Felix Frankfurter to the Supreme Court would make up a rather harrowing little anthology.

Some of this hostility to the Jew is of ancient vintage, but prior to the waning of Alfred E. Smith as a political figure it was seldom voiced above a whisper. Mr. Smith represented all the forces which had joined in defense against the Klan and everything which in one manner or another had been allied

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with it; and his Jewish friends and abettors were too numerous and prominent to be ignored. Nevertheless the ground was slowly being prepared in New York and elsewhere for the kind of attitude which the *Tablet* and Father Coughlin have latterly expressed. The roots of the trouble were to a considerable extent sociological. During the years between 1880 and 1920 the Irish had risen above immigrant status. They had amassed wealth, social prestige, political influence and professional patronage. The O'Haras were now bourgeois, affluent and comfortable. But subsequent to 1920 Jewry began to advance very rapidly in its turn. Brooklyn witnessed the migration of countless thousands from Manhattan's crowded East Side to garish new apartment house districts in its own Flatbush and Bay Ridge; and this migration inevitably meant a struggle for coveted middle-class positions and emoluments at the very time when an economic depression more severe than any previously known was settling down upon the community. Perhaps the rivalry was keenest inside the public school system though it was sharp enough certainly in the professions and the civil service. The Jew, agile of mind and avid for culture, was likewise normally hostile to the introduction of religious points of view into education, fearing that if stress were laid on Christian teaching and allegiances his own aloofness would prove a barrier to assimilation. Therewith a conflict which had been primarily a struggle for power became also an issue of manners and mores.

Some elaboration of what has been said may be in order. In the simpler society of pre-World War days, when brawny arms were needed in an expanding economy, education was a far less complex process than it has since become. Then relatively few went to college or even to high school. Catholics did not regard the problem of financing a parochial school system and of financing the academies and colleges to which their "bright" sons and daughters went a riddle beyond solution. The subsequent mass demand for higher learning was, however, not to be met by any private agency no matter how generously supported. Unavoidably large numbers of Catholic young people had to go

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to secular institutions for advanced study—and they went at the very time when public schools and colleges were being drained more and more completely of religious influence. The Church was acutely aware of the almost universal drift to indifference, moral laxity and philosophic skepticism. Realizing that segregation was impossible wide-awake leaders started a movement to foster religious instruction in the public schools. The critic may assert this effort was belated and that it was conducted without a great deal of insight into the psychology of public relations. But though there may be some truth in the charge one can hardly deny that Catholic fears were in large measure legitimate. On the other hand it is not surprising that many Jews, their history being what it has been, should be opposed to every step calculated to draw a line of demarcation between Christian and Jewish young people attending the public schools. No doubt this clash between two diverse points of view could be settled amicably but it has not been so settled. One misfortune was that Jewish rabbis and leaders had virtually no social intercourse with the Catholic clergy. At present there is a good deal of hostility, not always frankly admitted but nevertheless strong.

The fires of conflict thus enkindled burst into flame when Adolf Hitler came to power. This fact is in itself not surprising. So far in our American history, group and ideological enmities have always had a European background. The powerful waves of anti-Catholic feeling which swept across the country during the late 19th century were set in motion by the warfare between irredentist Italy and the Papal States. And in our time a Nazi philosophy which first of all expressed itself in terms of anti-Semitic persecution brought the Catholic-Jewish question as we have outlined it into the limelight. This is as strange a development as any in the annals of the United States and I realize that the time has not yet come to explain it fully. The little one can say is purely tentative.

Catholics generally did not understand the meaning of Hitler. Pope Pius XI did, to be sure, very clearly. As one who has been something of a specialist in recent German history and has for

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that reason been in constant touch with Roman authorities since 1932, I can assert categorically that neither the present Pontiff nor his predecessor was ever for a single moment in doubt that the rise of Nazism was a grave menace to Christianity. But inside Germany matters were quite different. Catholic men and women who had offered heroic resistance to Hitler were suddenly astonished to find their ecclesiastical superiors not merely eager to compromise but actually willing to believe Nazism a benign affair. The members of the Catholic majority in the legislative assembly of one federal state were startled to behold, as they were marched out of jail by their Nazi captors, their Archbishop riding down the street in an automobile festooned with swastikas and giving the Nazi salute. This cleric actually believed (and said so) that all was well in the best of possible Teutonic worlds—until the *Hitlerjugend* smashed all the 17th century windows in his baroque palace. More generally the attitude of the authorities was based during the early months of the Hitler regime on the conviction that if they manifested a desire to bury the tomahawk Hitler for his part would make peace with the Church. This was a typically German trend of thought, and it might have been proved correct if the Fuehrer had been a German and not an East European afflicted with an inferiority complex *vis-à-vis* Germany. At any rate the policy of great expectations failed abysmally. Meanwhile, however, irreparable damage had been done. Not only did no force remain which was capable of resistance but the wells had been poisoned. From that time until the present day it has proved impossible to wipe out the consequences of the step initially taken, no matter how glaring the rift between the Nazis and the German bishops became.

In the United States the great majority of Catholics, like the great majority of their American fellow-citizens, have always been opposed to Hitler. But an influential group was for a long time persuaded the German leader had been grossly maligned and that the Church would suffer no loss of prestige or opportunity if it refrained from "political" activity. These persons

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were often influenced by clerical or aristocratic propagandists from abroad in whose words they placed an almost childlike faith. When the present Pope, then Cardinal Pacelli, visited the United States as the guest of the late Mrs. Nicholas Brady he talked with me in German for some time and said earnestly that the Holy See was more concerned over the situation in Germany that it was over anything else then troubling the world, and that it viewed with the deepest alarm the peril to religion that had become incarnate in the Nazi movement. But there were those in my acquaintance who either refused to believe the Cardinal had made such remarks or held that if he had made them he must have been misinformed. Much support for this point of view came from those whose admiration of Mussolini was increasing. The Duce was considered a great statesman, a friend of religion and an unflinching foe of bolshevism.

As consequences of the attitude thus adopted anti-Semitism gained support and attacks on Jews were openly applauded in circles which had hitherto concealed their feelings. Some resented the sympathy so widely expressed for the victims of Hitler's race doctrines. They held that by comparison Catholics had been given virtually no support in their campaign against the Calles Government in Mexico. Inevitably these anti-Semitic groups became pro-Hitler groups as well, making common cause with the people who supported the Nazi movement for nationalistic and similar reasons. Catholic journalists who wrote in criticism of what was happening in Germany were often targets for abuse. Insulting and threatening letters accused them of economic dependence on Jews. I repeat that the number of those involved was small; but it was a determined, violent and influential minority. Thus when an attempt was made to stop American participation in the Berlin Olympic Games the anti-Hitler forces failed to carry the day because Catholic support was withdrawn at the critical moment. A few prominent pro-Nazis gained the victory.

Then two events of far-reaching significance occurred. The first was the Franco uprising against the Republic of Spain.

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Almost from the beginning the General had the support of the overwhelming majority of Catholic publications, which held that the Republic was godless and bolshevistic, that its object was to destroy the Church and that the Insurgents alone upheld law and order in Spain. These beliefs became veritable dogmas when Protestant, Jewish and liberal groups professed to see in the Franco movement the revival of evils as diverse as the Inquisition, tyranny and ignorance. Looking back I feel quite certain the victory of fascism in Spain is in part attributable to the utterly biased and unreflecting support the Loyalists received from their friends in this country. Normally reasonable and upright citizens declared in essence that it was all right to shoot a priest, since he was a retrograde sort of creature anyhow, but that shooting a workingman was a sacrilege. That Catholics reacted fiercely is hardly to be wondered at. The handful of Catholic journals which tried to see the thing steadily and as a whole—the *Commonweal*, the *New World*, the *Catholic Worker*—were doomed to failure from the start. There is no parallel in all our history for the rabid abuse they brought down on themselves. Alas and alack, virtually the sole result of the entire debate was almost irreparable damage to inter-group relations in the United States. The breach between a certain kind of Jewry and a certain kind of Catholicism grew menacingly wide. For while these Jews could see nothing at stake in Spain except the prestige of Hitler, the Catholics refused to consider anything else than burning churches and murdered priests. I shall say no more than this—the historian whose task it is to trace the history of intolerance in this country during the coming fifty years will point to the tragic Franco-Loyalist war as geologists point to a watershed.

The second event was the injection of an anti-Semitic note into Father Coughlin's broadcasts. Perhaps I may be allowed to say here that while I have never regarded the Detroit priest's oratory as symptomatic of aught other than the low state of American intelligence, I have also viewed with undiluted disapproval endeavors to galvanize him into a singularly terrifying

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theme for "propaganda analysis." This "science" is (I believe) quite as naive and primitive as are the editorials in *Social Justice*. Father Coughlin is fundamentally an actor—a gifted tragédien manqué. It is his nature to take on coloring from his environment and to absorb whatever ideas are in consonance with his "style." But there has been a curious kind of anti-Semitism in Detroit, of ancient and mysterious origin. Those men in Mr. Henry Ford's entourage who dug up the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and much similar rubbish, for reasons they have never indicated, are the men who passed these things on to Father Coughlin, though the way in which they did so must remain obscure. I do not believe there is any other transmission agency. True enough, Father Coughlin may have been annoyed that after an impressive beginning he was never assigned the place in Mr. Roosevelt's inner councils to which he had aspired. However these things may be he set out to give wide publicity to opinions and assertions not only in keeping with Nazi ideology but actually discoverable nowhere else save in Nazi propaganda literature. Thus *Social Justice* even called Friedrich Ebert, the first president of the Weimar Republic, a "bolshevistic Jew"—a glaring falsehood of which only the notorious Julius Streicher had previously been guilty.

This readiness of a chameleonesque radio preacher to become the mouthpiece of unscrupulous intolerance would have been ridiculous if it had not been consonant with other, more natural, forms of anti-Semitism. As he spoke many threads were tied together into the rope with which a great deal of the nation's peace and friendliness have been hanged. His utterances stiffened the backs of all those who in one way or another were friendly to Hitler and Mussolini. It gave anti-Semitism the same religious inlay which played so great a role in the Austria whence Hitler came; it raised the issue of fascism vs. democracy; and it carried the virus of race hatred to regions where it had never previously been known. It is of course true that probably only one follower out of a hundred got the full import of what Father Coughlin was saying. It may even be doubted that

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the "radio priest" himself understood what manner of message he was sponsoring. That is why the effect on Catholics outside the New York area has been relatively negligible. In the rural districts of the Middle West a priest is always listened to with respect when he is listened to at all; and there the principal conclusion derived from what came over the air from Detroit was that if Catholic doctrine were accepted by all men greed and poverty would disappear in a millennial reconciliation between the lion and the lamb. To the unspoiled Catholic the fundamental teachings of Christianity are sacred, and they include charity, fairness and regard for the truth. To the country as a whole anti-Semitism is even yet a meaningless term though the age-old antipathy between Protestant and Catholic abides. One can safely conclude that to the Catholic farmer in Wisconsin and Minnesota the Coughlin gospel was something directed at the godless in every group.

But in the New York area there is a different story to tell. For here there is a Jewish question. Here a slumbering conflict, based on sociological, educational and religious situations, threatened to become a destructive conflagration. The *Tablet*, organ of the Brooklyn diocese, adopted a strongly pro-fascist attitude which differed strangely from the spirit which breathed in the Bishop's Pastoral Letters. Its editors loaded the dice in advance against every "liberal" Catholic—i.e. every Catholic who opposed Hitler and Mussolini, queried the virtues of Franco or supported the New Deal. The bias against the last was so marked as to suggest a Rightist revolt might prove a blessing. Again and again Monsignor John A. Ryan, apostle of a living wage and of a righteous international order, was subjected to all sorts of abuse. The situation in Brooklyn as a whole was so tense for a time that in a number of districts armed bands were formed on both sides. Then the crisis abated somewhat. The improvement may be ascribed to world events—the pact between Hitler and Stalin, the outbreak of the war, the conduct of the Vatican. The best authorities say, however, that the foremost single contribution to peace was the rise of the Brooklyn Dodgers as pennant

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contenders. This does not mean that the *Tablet* has changed its mind. It merely proves again, even to those who are not cynics, that normally the public is more concerned with bread and circuses than with editorials.

Now let us look at the other side. It is correct to state that no Catholic intellectual has supported either the *Tablet* or Father Coughlin. Unfortunately the influence of these intellectuals is decidedly limited. On the one hand they are without status inside their own communion. On the other they get precious little support outside it. The writer of Catholic books can find no market; and the instructor in the Catholic college has no tenure. The organs of opinion to which the laymen can contribute are few in number, financially insecure to the point of constant peril, and often dominated by the eccentricities of editors whose right eye is fixed on heaven while the left scans a favorite and impractical recipe for getting there. The Catholic Church in the United States is a great Church. Its contribution to the moral and even the physical health of the nation is greater than that of any other agency. Served by priests devoted to their cause and their flocks, it is predominatingly laborious and sane. The charitable work done by its religious and their lay affiliates is far-reaching and very wise. But as at present constituted the Catholic body has virtually no use for intellectuals. Catholic writing has seldom been at so low an ebb. The educated Catholic has never been so much alone in the midst of his fellowmen. There are nevertheless a goodly number of Catholic intellectuals—men of probity and of science, of loyalty to ideals and of devotion to every good cause. And nothing finer can be said of them as a group than that they have unanimously looked upon the *Tablet* and *Social Justice* with abhorrence.

The great mass of the Catholic public is wholly unaffected by the kind of debate which has been raging. By and large it is a people of laborers and artisans, of farmers and civil servants. Religion means very much to these people. No change of style or fortune keeps them from attendance at church or from doing

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what they can to support a pastor and maintain a school. But their notions of the world in which we live and their conceptions of political or economic policy do not differ from those of their compatriots. They are sure that the Church is allied with freedom and righteousness. The Papacy is a heaven-sent institution which seeks to promote peace and justice. By reason of their economic status many Catholics are what one might term "leftists." Others are conservative. The percentages in either case would not vary greatly from the norm. I venture to predict that a Gallup Poll taken among Catholics exclusively would not differ from a poll taken among the rest of the population if the questions asked had to do with the nation's destiny. Naturally origins mean something. On issues affecting Ireland and Great Britain the Irish-American Catholic will usually have his point of view. But not all Catholics are Irish nor do the Irish agree.

The clergy resembles the people whence it springs. It is surprisingly humble, hard working and high minded. It is perhaps the most orthodox priesthood in the world. Being recruited from the humbler walks of life few who belong to it are caste-conscious. Most priests depend upon the generosity of the faithful and the plants they supervise are expensive. They therefore want what are called "good times" and are as ready as anybody else to criticize a government unfortunate enough to coincide with "bad times." It would, however, be a great mistake to term them bourgeois or conservative. Still they are usually quite unworldly and are easily duped by the canny who exude piety for a purpose. A politician who carries the banner of the Holy Name Society in a parish procession may be as crooked as a divining rod but he will get further with his pastor than the honest man who refuses to be ostentatious. It follows that outside a few domains —the practice of religion, sex morality and education—the priest exerts little influence over his parishioners. But when these areas are affected he may react violently, even a little unreasonably. He may suspect a threat where none has been intended. He may confuse a political situation with a moral issue. But in his reasoned opinion as well as in his mistakes he is likely to be an

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individual and to dissent from his brethren of the cloth as much as from his lay acquaintances.

Yes, there may be a "Christian Front" in this country, begotten of anti-Semitism, Nazism and the depression, but there is no "Catholic Front." Possibly this is regrettable. It is not difficult to imagine that if half a dozen Bishops as farseeing and intelligent as the prelate who now rules over Father Coughlin's diocese were to rally Catholic opinion in support of objectives which in these dark days are identifiable with the defense of civilization, the nation and indeed the whole world would profit. Yet one may well doubt that the time is ripe for any such move. It would in all likelihood succeed only if Catholic opinion had been marshalled by an alert and vigorous journalism fully abreast of the times. Even the rudiments of such a journalism do not exist. What the Catholic press reflects at this hour is the state of mind of small groups, of isolated communities, of intellects which push conformism to the verge of absurdity. Nothing could, therefore, be a worse blunder than to identify American Catholicism with any of the "movements" we have been describing. These merely demonstrate that American Catholicism has not attained self-consciousness.

These things being as they are it was possible for a segment of the American Church to be so completely gullible as to absorb some draughts of Nazi propaganda. All that Hitler stands for is, however, so obvious in these dark hours that the evil will correct itself. In a postscript to a recent article concerning the war Monsignor Ryan declared that at present only the illiterate or the psychopathic could any longer be pro-Nazi or neutral. That would seem to be the plain truth of the matter.

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Impression of Ireland

IRWIN EDMAN

I KNOW quite well that the way I am going to write about Ireland is not an analysis of the civilization in that bemusing island. I should, I know, be concerned in detail, or with profound speculation, however hypothetical, with the racial strains, the heritage of folklore, the intellectual and religious cross-currents which have made Ireland. Nor do I propose a contribution to sociology. I remember once meeting a radical Irish-American author in Dublin during my brief—and enchanted—stay there. He had been in the city scarcely any longer than I. He was already filled, even to the statistics, with the agricultural backwardness, the ecclesiastical family skeletons, the political morasses, of Irish life. He was depressed by all these things and so obsessed by them that he had failed to notice the green of the grass in Ireland, the cadences of its speech or the humor and poetry that played over the surface of its life, however tragic. He was doubtless more mature in his observation than I. He deserved a Guggenheim Fellowship for a project on The Condition of Ireland at the Present Time.

That condition has certainly grown worse. I know, by the time these lines are printed, that the Ireland in the newspapers will not be the one I am trying, from a few weeks' delighted experience, to recapture in memory. It may be an Ireland filled with parachutist German soldiers and the Gestapo may be established in the General Postoffice or on O'Connell Street.

The Ireland I remember is something different, perhaps only a sentimental fragment conjured up from the memories of a month of soft mist and soft rain and the briefest bursts of soft sunshine, gilded, too, with the colors of previous expectation.

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But it is the Ireland I do remember, and remember as one of the singularly gracious oases of travel in a world where travel and delectation have become impossible.

Of course one comes to a country expecting to find certain things and if the country or one's own imagination is susceptible of creative fiction one finds it. My expectations were, I confess, formed on literary fragments and on an acquaintance with a few Irish people—not many and certainly not typical.

Maria who keeps house for me is, I suppose, not typical. Not altogether, that is. But there are authentic Irishisms in her after 35 years in New York, and not only in speech, though Ireland lives on in her language. When guests come unexpectedly I hear her remark that they have come over the bog, or when I get up particularly early that I'm early to Briney's with my wheel. It lives, too, in her pagan and material Catholicism, in her enjoyment of sudden deaths and of well-attended funerals, in her general kindness and her gusts of dark irrational moodiness, inexplicable and, for the moment, incurable.

Norah is, perhaps, not typical either, or not altogether so. A cultivated lady who has lived all her life in New York, her imagination has lived all its life in Ireland. Her conversation was dotted with affectionate references to parts of Dublin which, up to a few years ago, she had never seen. She has at her tongue's end a ceaseless stream of anecdotes about the clergy and the peasants, stories always testifying to their quickness and their imagination if not always to their reasonableness or integrity. Now that Norah has actually been to Dublin there are even more stories and the old ones have acquired an exact and documented setting. It was Norah, I think, who made me finally decide I must see Ireland; and the decisive thing was her account of the blessing, a whole torrential page long, that a beggar in Dublin shouted after her when she gave him sixpence, a benediction which she remembered word for word, or, since she is Irish too, may have invented. A country where one could be blessed that long and that vividly for sixpence! It was no wonder when, one summer in England, having to make up my mind whether I

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would go to see Sweden the Middle Way, or Denmark the Co-operative Commonwealth, or Ireland, I chose the last. I had a prophetic feeling that Ireland was eternal and that the middle way and the cooperative commonwealth were not. For Hitler was already threatening Czechoslovakia. I chose, perhaps unwisely, the eternal.

But it was not only Irish friends who made me wish to see Ireland. Who that has heard the liquid and wistful cadences of the Abbey Players or read Yeats or George Moore, or Joyce, has not wished to see it, or, better, to hear it at home where it lives? The comic-stage Irishman had long been exiled from my memory by the transcendental Irishman, compounded of poetry and lustiness, of squalid realism tinctured with the eeriness and magic one comes to know in Irish literature. Celtic twilights and the winds wailing over the West Country, peasants standing against the rocks or by a hut in the moors, a gleam of merriment in a house of tragedy, all these went into the complex of my expectations as at Euston Station I boarded the Irish Mail.

Even the name of the train had childhood associations. For had I not once had a child's handcar, painted red, with which I had coasted down Morningside Park in New York and had not the little red handcar been called the Irish Mail? I remembered having inquired what was meant by that. I had inquired of a policeman whose childhood had been spent in Dublin. He described the train that came west in England to the coast at Holyhead and the Mail steamer across to Kingstown and the great Westland Row Station in the heart of Dublin itself.

And here I was already, in spirit and by virtue of my fellow-travellers, in Ireland. There was one Englishman in the compartment and I expected that constrained and courteous suspicion with which English passengers generally, or at least before the War, regarded strangers; the others were Irish. One detected at once from the accent, that singing blend of gaiety and melancholy which is Irish speech, that these were Irish people. One detected it, too, from the atmosphere of a house-party current ten minutes after we left London. Long before we got

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to Holyhead everyone knew everyone else's destination, family history, psychological problems, financial status; and all had enlightened me with pleasant competitive opinions on what was most worth seeing in Ireland. Only the Englishman was primly still.

But Ireland itself began for me at Westland Row Station. I am quite prepared to believe there is an international race of taxi-drivers, and that there is a closer ethnological relationship between hackmen in Chicago and Singapore than between a Middle-Western American passenger and his taxi-man. None the less I do not think anyone save an Irishman could have said exactly the words, or lighted on the thought, uttered by the driver I encountered as soon as I left the train at Dublin. "The Shelburne Hotel" I said. And within something like a minute and a half, for it was only just around the corner, I was there. "How much?" I said. "Three shillings" replied the driver. "But it's only just around the corner." The driver looked at me with an expression compounded of pity and scorn and a sighing despair that there was no more reasonableness current in this absurd world. "And me," he said, "waiting three hours here at Westland Row Station for a customer, and you complaining about a few shillings more or less!" It was an answer nicely calculated to promote in me or in anyone a feeling of meanness and, what was even worse, of having been utterly silly.

For weeks thereafter one of the pleasures of Ireland for one academic wanderer was the delicious unexpectedness of conversation, cropping up at the most routine occasions and from the most commonplace persons. One had but to ask a policeman where one could post a letter, for instance, to be looked at firmly with a tincture of good-natured contempt and curiosity and to receive the reply "And what," pointing to the huge building across the street, "would be wrong with the General Post Office?" One had but to ask the hotel porter "Is the afternoon train to Galway a good train?" to have him reply "A good train, sir? It's fit for King George the Sixth himself, or the President of *your* United States!" One would only have to bemoan a

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cloudy day to be assured that "It was a fine day surely, for if the sun were shining, it would mean that it was going to rain."

And one discovered in this charming people, sometimes in the shabbiest of surroundings, the expected but somehow always unexpected gift for poetry and laughter in the midst of the prose of life and its grimness. A question would not bring an answer but a soliloquy, and the soliloquy was more often than not something that with not very much editing might have gone into one of Synge's plays. It cropped up, the fanciful flow of rhetoric, the turn of humorous paradox of phrase or thought, in every class of society. One heard it at a gathering of authors in Dublin, from the country priest or the waitress at a village inn in Connemara or from the professor of medicine at Trinity College. One could not help speculating on the origins and the implications of this passion for speech in Ireland and the delight in it. How did it happen, I kept asking myself, that this love of words and their deployment, the obvious delight in the music made by phrases and the pleasant counterpoint one might play upon meanings and associations, was a game enjoyed not simply by the men of letters in Ireland? How did it happen that so many *were* by instinct men of letters? I heard grave men, deeply versed in the tragic history of Ireland and concerned for its future, speculate on this very thing. "It's a joy to you, a visitor," they said, "but it's been one of the curses of Ireland. More than anywhere in the world the mind runs away in Ireland. It is seduced by images and caught up by the stream of words. The internecine bitterness has often been a quarrel over slogans, or a quarrel for the sake of the rhetorical excitement of controversy, a rhetoric that has often been paid for in blood."

I was reminded of all this a week or more later in Galway. I had gone off to the West Country on the suggestion of Sean O'Failon, the Irish novelist, who said to me "You'd better see the West of Ireland if you really wish to say you have seen this island. That's Ireland; here in Dublin we're all corrupted; we are Anglo-Irish. We're uneasy colonials. Go west."

I was at first disappointed, for the town of Galway itself is

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at first glance marked chiefly by gray squalor. The women look very picturesque with their shawls wound round their heads. But they look older than one suspects them to be and there is misery in their eyes. The shops are dirty and sullen looking and the houses are, most of them, grimy tenements.

In a squalid side street I came upon a little shop with a captivating array of Irish lace and embroidery framed in a forlorn dirty window. I saw one piece I was sure Norah would like. Behind the counter was a half kindly, half belligerent looking, middle-aged woman. She reminded me of Maria in one of her less expansive moods. "How's business?" I could not help asking when I had made my purchase. I had learned that one question in Ireland sufficed often to yield an oration. The woman of the shop looked at me almost angrily. "And how's business, you're asking? How's business!" she repeated, almost contemptuously. "How would it be?" she said. "Terr-ible. And it's been terrible," she added, leaning over the counter and shaking an expository forefinger at me, "it's been terrible ever since the blackguards brought us our freedom."

"But," I said, "I thought the Irish wanted their freedom?" "Did they now?" she said. "Did they now! Listen to that! Wanted their freedom, did they? And wasn't it a great country here in the West of Ireland, full of English toffs and lords and swells, spending their money like gentlemen and helping all the country roundabout with their hunting and fishing and their great houses and the hordes of servants they had. There was Lady L— and a grand lady she was too. *That* important," she stretched her arms out as wide as they would go, "you would have to get a parchment that long and signed with all the important names of East and West to get to see her at all. And what a blessing she was to the countryside, with her parties and the grand shenanigans during the hunting season and her graciousness to all the people in the whole county of Galway. And what did those blackguards do now? They burned down her house. And don't you think," she said, looking at me intently as if to see if I followed closely the logic of her argument, "and

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don't you think, now," she repeated with that sense for rhythm no less than for reiteration that I had repeatedly observed in this country, "don't you think, now, she'd be moving away?" She did not wait for assent. "Well, she did!"

Part of the real Ireland I had been urged to see in Galway was a Professor Michael Moriarty of Galway University. He was Professor of English literature in Galway but that was accidental, I was told, rather than essential to him. He really should have been teaching Gaelic, for no one could better have embodied, so I had been forewarned, intense Irish nationalism. Had he not lived through the Trouble and in 1922 had his house not been a center of the Irish Republican Army? And had he not been sent to Galway as a perfectly fitting emissary of the specifically Irish Nationalist movement in education? It was with pleasurable anticipation that I sought out the Professor a mile out of town. Did I mind waiting? he began, his head close to the radio, until the football match between Galway and Cork was ended. It was a beautiful game and it was being beautifully announced (as indeed it was) by one of his former students; and the championship of Ireland, Southern Ireland, the Ireland that counted, was dependent on the issue. The game ended, we settled down to an enormous tea during which I was instructed that to see the real Ireland I had to go still further. The Eire I had been hearing about for an hour seemed real enough. It was the Ireland of the Trouble, and "Mind you, all incriminating papers had to be hidden in the crib of this young lady here," pointing to his sixteen-year-old daughter. "It was a lively world we lived in in 1922. Ireland was full of passion, then, and of hopes. We were all a little crazy, surely, but it's crazy we were for an ideal. We're soberer now, and a little dead.

"But you must have a look at the real Ireland; you haven't seen it yet. It's not in the green Southern counties or in the pretty speech of the women of Cork. You must go to Connemara. There it is lonely, it is clear, it is beautiful. Pity my young son isn't here to go with you. He's a poet, the lad is. He tries to keep it from us. He tears up his poems and throws them in the waste-

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basket. But his mother here has pieced them together and some of them are very lovely. I wish my son, the poet, were here, for he could guide you well."

I rather wished during the succeeding days in Connemara that I had had a poet with me. Not that one needed a poet, even an Irish one, to point out the melancholy loveliness, the spacious tragic charm of the hills and moors of Connemara. There were many things I had been told I should find on this island: relics of ancient superstitions, medieval Christianity, the pitiful and the picturesque poverty bequeathed from the days of the absentee landlords, squalor and comedy, dirt and magic. Nobody had told me I should find Greece, transposed into a Celtic key. But here it was, the same clear bare outlines of mountains, and a lonely clean-cut peasant boy standing by his cart against a sky in this August light, almost, though I had found out by this time how briefly, a Mediterranean blue. I could not help thinking of how long, during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Ireland had been an outpost of European, that is to say of Greco-Roman, culture. It was a long way from Sunion on an Aegean headland, to Connemara; but here, on an Irish headland above the sea, one could imagine a Greek temple beckoning mariners from the West as the one at Sunion beckoned those from the East. And, as the evening mist settled down over these gray rocks and gray sea, one thought of the singular transpositions and modulations Greek thought and feeling had gone through, in Ireland not least. One thought of the Celtic accent of magic and mystery that the Irish scholar, Stephen McKenna, had given Plotinus in his great poetic translation; of Dublin University, the center of classical studies. Here, in the West of Ireland, it was not too surprising to find a magically-transmuted image of Greece.

My Dublin friends smiled a little at my enthusiasm for Ireland, though not without pleasure. They would not believe even my notebook when I recited to them turns of phrase or of thought I had picked up in my wanderings, South and West and in Dublin itself. They would deny with a music and pic-

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turesqueness of which they themselves were completely unaware that the Irish, peasant or professor, spoke as vividly as I insisted they did or that their imaginations had any idiosyncrasy of enchantment. They aired the troubles of Ireland, the bog of disillusion in which the romantic nationalism of the early 20's had left the intellectuals. I would speak with delight of the atmosphere of an 18th-century town, dignified and intimate, which was Dublin at its best. They would reply despairingly of the Puritan provincialism, the backwater of culture Dublin had become. I would mention the Abbey Theatre and they would say its best days were over. I had but to speak of the warmth and graciousness with which the Irish, priests and poets, farmers and doctors, received a stranger. "But you have not been here long enough," they would say, "to see, and you apparently do not remember how the Irish have treated each other." There was indeed only one point at which I could elicit an agreement; that was about the green of Ireland. And they agreed about that chiefly because I had been complaining about the rain. "But," said my novelist friend, "if it did not rain so much it would not be Ireland and if it did not rain so much it would not be so green."

Staring through the window at that almost unbelievably intense green I apologized. Could it be, I wondered, that it required a land so bathed in vividness to produce a people so bathed in vivid images and vivid speech? This was a race of poets, surely, bred on intensities. The air of this island made the tragedy of this people. It nourished their passions as the rain bred their melancholies, and the mists clouded their minds with historic bitterness. Perhaps by the time these lines appear, I repeat, the Gestapo may be in O'Connell Street. I do not think they will be able to erase the color on St. Stephen's Green or the music of Irish speech or the free flights of their imaginations. Not England or the Church or famine have been able to do that.

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The Farm Problem—Chemurgy to the Rescue

C. C. FURNAS

PROBABLY there has always been a farm problem but only recently has it become political in a large way. Legislative panaceas all seem to center around the theory that the helpless farmer is being cheated by ruthless speculators and businessmen and that legislative conniving should be able to remedy the matter. It seems that the production of the major American farm products is always a few jumps ahead of the existing demand, that consequently the economics of scarcity does not operate to keep prices up, and the farmer is left holding his mortgage plus a few gratuitous pennies for all his efforts. The recommended remedy is to cut down production or artificially raise and control prices—or a little of both.

Seldom does the legislative mind realize that the farmer might be brought out of the doldrums on a few zephyrs of increased demand. But where can one look for a great new market? Hardly in domestic food consumption, even though there *is* a certain amount of undernourishment and an appalling amount of malnourishment in America. There should be an increase of a few per cent in the total production of food and a definite shift in the proportion of the different foodstuffs. There should be an increase in the use of protective foods—fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products and eggs—and a decrease in high carbohydrate foods such as cereal grains, sugar and potatoes. These shifts would call for an addition of only about 10 per cent to the acreage now devoted to domestic food crops. If they could take place overnight they might help the farmer. But that will not happen. And while the left hand of the Department of Agriculture was organizing legislation to secure higher

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prices for agricultural goods the right hand, unwittingly perhaps, was increasing the farmers' efficiency of production. Something more is called for. There must be a reservoir of consumption, almost limitless in extent, which will accommodate itself to those variations in production which are ever-dependent on the vagaries of weather, insects, rusts and blights.

Hope for such a reservoir is found in "chemurgy." This is a word, just now celebrating its fifth birthday, coined by an organic chemist, William J. Hale, to serve as substitute for some such cumbersome phrase as "the science of the utilization of agricultural products in chemical industry." In derivation and implication it is analogous to "metallurgy," the science of the utilization of metals.

The idea is older than the word. An editorial in *Farm and Fireside* (now *The Country Home Magazine*) in 1926 suggested that the industrialist is not the enemy of the farmer and that if the field were properly cultivated, agricultural surpluses could find an almost infinite market in manufacturing plants. The editor beat this drum persistently and found a sympathetic audience in other editors, in the Chemical Foundation and in Henry Ford. Finally, with Henry Ford as host and with prominent people representing agriculture, business and chemical industry in attendance, the first Dearborn Conference was held at Dearborn, Michigan in May 1935. Out of that meeting grew the National Farm Chemurgic Council, dedicated to fostering the use of chemistry in aid of the farmer through research, technical development and education. In 1938 the Department of Agriculture began to be interested; and the Agricultural Act of that year included an appropriation of $4,000,000 for the establishment of four regional research laboratories to seek "industrial and non-food" uses for farm products. These laboratories, which should all be completed and in operation by the end of the current year, are at Peoria, New Orleans, Philadelphia and San Francisco. In 1939 announcements were made of the appointment of State Chemurgic Commissions by the Governors of Ohio and Missouri. The Commissions are charged to

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study the utilization within their states of agricultural materials for other than food purposes. Under other names similar commissions have been set up in Arkansas, Mississippi and Vermont.

It would be naive to suggest that until recently there have been no non-food uses for the products of the land. Textiles, tobacco and alcoholic beverages are big business; plant dyestuffs, particularly indigo, used to be. There have been a number of minor industrial uses of farm products. The chemurgic movement is directed particularly to expanding the old uses and developing new ones.

As a consequence of the rapidly-growing lacquer business following the first World War the Commercial Solvents Corporation of Terre Haute, Indiana and Peoria, Illinois has been taking a good deal of excess corn off the farmers' hands for some 20 years. Strains of a bacillus, Clostridium acetobutylicum, which would ferment corn to give good yields of butyl alcohol and acetone and only a small amount of ethyl or grain alcohol, were developed. The butyl alcohol and its derivatives form one of the most important groups of solvents used in the lacquer industry, particularly for the nitrocellulose lacquers made from cotton. The finish on an average automobile represents the solvents obtained from two bushels of corn or their equivalent. The acetone and ethyl alcohols have a wide range of uses in various chemical industries.

Fermentation processes almost invariably produce gas, more often than not carbon dioxide. But Clostridium acetobutylicum is peculiar; it gives off hydrogen and carbon dioxide in equal amounts. And if, after proper treatment, these are forced to combine under conditions of high temperature and pressure they produce synthetic methanol, wood alcohol. This wood alcohol has wide use as a solvent for lacquers and plastics and as an anti-freeze agent for automobiles but it is also a raw material for plastics itself. It can easily be converted into formaldehyde, one of the principal constituents of the Bakelite type of plastic and of the urea-formaldehyde type which is used to make midget radio cabinets and many of the gadgets cluttering

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the counters in the 5 and 10 cent stores. It is also one of the basic materials for the very clear resins of the type of Lucite or Plexiglass. And the carbon dioxide, left over after the methanol is synthesized, is cooled and compressed to give solid carbon dioxide (Dry-ice), 60 tons of it per day.

The company also engages in the more conventional fermentation of corn to produce the more common ethyl or grain alcohol. Next to water, grain alcohol is the most important solvent we have in industry. All in all this one corporation can use, each day in the year, the corn grown annually on 1000 acres of fertile farm land. And yet though this sounds impressive it is a pretty negligible part of the whole picture; for with the total crop acreage in this country standing at about 300,000,000 a mere 365,000 acres for one industrial use is unimportant in itself. Actually about 9 per cent of the corn crop in the United States leaves the farm for the hoppers of the industrial plants. Of this 9 per cent about one fourth goes right back to the farm as feed for animals and another half becomes human food in one form or another. But though only one fourth of 9 per cent of the corn crop has a chemurgic ending this suggests what might happen if all outlets were carefully developed—provided the farmer's products are available at a price low enough to make them suitable raw materials for chemical industry.

Ears are not the only things found in cornfields; there are millions of tons of stalks every year. Traditionally, after a certain limited proportion is used as a rather inferior stock feed the rest is burned or plowed under. As a fertilizer the value of cornstalks is very low, for by the time a forage crop is matured about 95 per cent of the fertilizing compounds are found in the seed. Stalks are for the most part made up of cellulose and fiber —the product of the chemical interaction of water, sunshine and the carbon dioxide of the air.

For years the principal proponent of making something out of them has been a chemical engineer, Mr. O. R. Sweeney, a professor at the State College at Ames, Iowa. But as yet very little has been done along this line, owing in no small degree to

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the apparent unwillingness or inability of farmers to sell cornstalks at a price that would make them attractive as a chemical raw material. Satisfactory newsprint in small quantities has been made from them. A way of processing large quantities cheaply must be worked out, but this can certainly be done; and if means were devised for delivering worn-out stalks to industrial plants at a sufficiently low figure a few million tons per year could be utilized.

To evaluate the potentialities of cornstalks and similar farm wastes we should turn to what is being done in other fields. Look first at rayon, essentially alpha-cellulose or some of its derivatives, spun into fine, smooth threads. The industry started by using the cellulose of cotton linters (the short fibers clinging to cottonseed) but has largely turned now to pulp made from spruce wood, principally because the cost is less. Other soft woods such as birch can also be used. Since cornstalks contain a goodly amount of alpha-cellulose (though not so much as cotton fiber or wood pulp) rayon could be made from them. As a matter of fact it has, on an experimental scale; but to date this has not developed into an industry, partly because no really satisfactory method for purification of the cellulose has been developed and partly because the cost of the raw material delivered to a plant is as yet too high. Obviously methods must be developed for bringing costs of production down inasmuch as the almost 300,000,000 pounds of rayon produced annually in this country might provide a reasonably attractive outlet for some of the waste products of the farm.

We consume in this country about 16,000,000 tons of paper per year—almost 250 pounds per year for every man, woman and child. That figure of course covers newsprint, wrapping paper, books, absorbent tissue, cardboard and the heavy paper boards.

The raw materials of paper are cellulose and the fibrous material, lignin, found in all trees and plants. The bulk of our paper comes from the soft woods of northern United States, Canada and, to a limited extent, from the Scandinavian coun-

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tries. But the supply from the northern part of the United States is beginning to dwindle because the policy has been "cut and get out" and Canada is headed in the same direction. Almost any cellulosic plant material, however, will serve for our paper supply if the pulp can be made of a sufficiently good quality at a sufficiently low price. Some years back a few pioneers with the chemurgic idea began looking to our own southland. At the present time the answer to the paper problem seems to lie in southern slash pine. And this is a natural business for the southern farmer. Until a few years ago paper manufacturers contended that southern pine is so full of resinous material it could never be used for paper. But that was a case of insufficient investigation and of snap judgment. Whereas two decades ago kraft paper (the strong brown wrapping) could not be made from southern woods, now over 60 per cent of it is manufactured from southern slash pine. About a decade ago Dr. C. H. Herty, a past president of the American Chemical Society, a native of Georgia, an energetic and able man, decided he was going to do something to help the southern farmer out of his sad plight. In a few years he raised meager funds for the Pulp and Paper Laboratory at Savannah, Georgia and produced indisputably good newsprint and book paper from slash pine at costs (as determined by small-scale factory operation) definitely lower than those in the North. The work, moreover, is just beginning to bear fruit. Factories for making newsprint from southern pine are being built and unless the movement is hamstrung by financial interests (northern producers do not care for the southern development) it is going to be a large factor in the life of the South.

The secret of Herty's success lay in his use of young trees, taken before they were old enough to become highly resinous. That is where the farmer fits in. These trees can be planted and will flourish on abandoned or run-down farm lands. For at least three years the soil can be used for annual crops. In ten to twelve years the trees are ready to be harvested for papermaking; the pines grow very fast in the South if given a chance. It is a farm-

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ers' crop and a potentially profitable one, with a ten-year cycle instead of one.

Straw, for many years used to a limited extent for the making of certain grades of cardboard, constitutes another entering wedge into the paper business—a wedge that is as yet insignificant but might be greatly expanded.

It is a jerry-built house that in these days does not have some sort of thermal insulation in the walls and ceilings. The domestic insulation business really began to grow when in 1920 the Celotex Corporation put up a plant on the Mississippi River opposite New Orleans. The raw material going into the plant was sugarcane bagasse (the fibrous residue of the cane from which the juice had been squeezed and which had up to that time been used merely for boiler fuel); the finished product that emerged was the now well-known Celotex insulating board. This company, producing over 2 million square feet of insulating board per day, consumes 10,000 carloads of the agricultural waste, bagasse, per year. Cornstalks, too, have been used for making wallboard. A small plant in the business at Dubuque, Iowa a few years ago turned out a product of a quality which, though not so good as that made from bagasse, was entirely adequate, and the quality undoubtedly could have been improved. Even though the company failed (because of business rather than technical deficiencies) the experiment was satisfactory; acceptable wallboard at an acceptable price can be made from cornstalks—a development worth the Iowa farmers' thought.

Furfural, a rather pungent organic liquid produced in large quantities by the Quaker Oats Company, has many important uses. One of the largest is in the refining of many brands of motor lubricating oil. Another is as one of the constituents of many of the modern plastic resins. And thereby hangs a tale of considerable importance for the future. Most of the fibrous materials—wood, cornstalks, straw—contain a considerable amount of the class of compounds known as pentosans. By a relatively simple treatment with superheated steam or hot water under pressure plus some dilute sulfuric acid these pen-

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tosans can be converted into furfural. Experimental work has demonstrated that when this furfural is put back into the condensed or polymerized fibrous residue from the process, a strong, inexpensive plastic board having a tight impervious surface is formed. This may prove to be a unique building material, for replacing antiquated plaster inside our houses and perhaps for covering weather-exposed surfaces. Again out of cornstalks, Mr. Sweeney, mentioned above, has experimentally produced window frames so strong one can jump on them with vigor but safety.

In recent months a good deal of publicity has been forthcoming on plastic airplanes. This designation is somewhat misleading. The most successful work along this line has been done with the machine-manufacture of large sheets of plywood, glued together with a waterproof Bakelite plastic resin. This process bears promise of being a means to the rapid, large-scale, inexpensive production of airplane fuselages and wings and perhaps of automobile bodies. But though plywood now seems to be the most suitable material it may be that any of the fibrous plant products might serve for the backbone of such construction—a possibility that immediately suggests still further use of agricultural wastes.

If the farmers become really interested in the utilization of cellulosic materials they may find it worth while to grow crops for that alone. Cotton and flax are of course cellulosic but there would be a difference in the types planted if the crop were grown for maximum cellulose production designed to go completely into chemical processing. The future of cotton may be found in so genetically changing the plant that it will produce a larger bulk of stalks and leaves, the fiber of the bolls being incidental. The whole plant would then be harvested and fed into the vats of chemical plants. Or Ramie (China Grass) might be cultivated. This gives a considerably higher annual cellulose yield per acre than even the southern slash pine. It has, moreover, one of the strongest natural fibers known. If a satisfactorily inexpensive decortication process were available

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for separating this fiber from the rest of the plant the fiber would be much more widely used and the residual cellulosic material could be chemurgically employed. These are merely suggestions to point out future possibilities.

The tougher part of plant cells is composed of lignin, which until recently has been pure waste, a nuisance and a source of serious stream pollution. But recently stubborn reseachers have found it an inexpensive raw material for the making of some of the useful organic acids and for the flavoring agent, vanillin. These finds are insignificant, however, compared with the discovery that highly satisfactory plastics can be manufactured out of the lignin wastes from paper mills (at the reputed low cost of production of a cent a pound or less). Although these plastics are dark in color they may be of tremendous importance in the construction industries—and therefore to farmers since cornstalks, straw and other farm wastes are loaded with lignin.

A large proportion of the corn now consumed by manufacturing plants is converted into cornstarch, which in turn is converted into corn syrup or corn sugar. But essential foods as these are I shall not take them up here because this discussion is directed toward non-food, and hence new, uses. Starch, whether employed in the sizing of textiles or paper, as the raw material for alcoholic beverages, or for other and much larger industrial purposes, is a highly valuable basic chemical with a list of chemurgic potentialities as diverse as that of any of the other plant products. The butyl-alcohol-acetone fermentation process of the Commercial Solvents Corporation, discussed above, employs starch as a raw material. At present about 200,000,000 pounds of corn and almost 2,000,000,000 pounds of molasses each year go to the vats to be converted into industrial ethyl alcohol by yeasts. The choice of corn or molasses depends almost entirely upon the cost of the raw material delivered to the manufacturer.

Bacteriologists and chemists have been cooperating in recent years and have developed strains of yeast and bacteria with the ability to produce a variety of organic chemical compounds such

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as citric, lactic, oxalic, succinic, malic, propionic and kojic acids, acetaldehyde, ethyl acetate and glycerine. Straight chemical processes (as distinguished from the processes which utilize the fermentations promoted by yeast and bacteria) are responsible for starch nitrate, lactic acid, sorbitol and mannitol and various types of resins. Both types of products have been used in everything from medicine to flavorings, explosives and plastics. Even so the commercial possibilities in both production and use are as yet relatively untouched. Many commercial laboratories are working in this field; and one of the major divisions of the New Department of Agriculture's Regional Laboratory at Peoria, Illinois will be devoted to research on the fermentation industries.

Some of the homely things of life often have a larger industrial use than is realized. One of these is paste. Admittedly adhesives made from starch do not and probably never will stand much exposure to dampness; but fortunately this does not necessarily rule them out of use. Dextrin, a derivative from starch, is one of the substances in the gum on stamps and the flaps of envelopes. In recent years the demand for corrugated-paper containers and boxes has grown by leaps and bounds. Whether or not these corrugated boxes are satisfactory depends entirely upon the quality of the adhesive fastening the ribbing to the flat sheets. And the 30,000,000,000 square feet of corrugated cardboarding manufactured annually call for 600,000,000 pounds of liquid adhesive. Formerly sodium silicate (water glass) was used almost exclusively; but since 1936, when a suitable adhesive with a starch base was developed, the two have divided the field about equally.

No single one of these suggested uses for starch will represent an Eldorado for the American farmer, but their sum total is impressive.

Most of the publicity the farm chemurgic movement has received has centered around the hope of using grain alcohol as a motor fuel, this alcohol to be obtained from the starches or sugars of corn, potatoes, Jerusalem artichokes, Kaffir corn, sor-

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ghum, sugar cane, sweet potatoes and so on. The proponents of this hope have been ultra-enthusiastic. Alcohol as a motor fuel is in competition with gasoline and at the present time gasoline can be produced for a fraction of the cost of alcohol. Alcohol is a perfectly usable motor fuel. But aside from the price of the raw materials, the cost of processing alcohol amounts to between 12 and 15 cents a gallon. The total cost of gasoline, including raw material, petroleum, and its processing, is about 5 cents a gallon. And this 5 cents buys a fuel with a caloric power greater by one third than that of alcohol. As our petroleum supply approaches depletion this difference in price may very well change but that is at least a couple of decades away. Perhaps it would be economically sound even now to subsidize the conversion of temporary agricultural excesses into fuel alcohol rather than to let the products of the farm rot in the field; but as a major, steady source of income for the farmer, fuel alcohol should not yet be taken seriously.

Some plant oils have long been staple food items. Others, such as linseed oil without which the old-time painter would have been lost, serve industrial ends. Some, like cottonseed oil, are dual-purpose materials.

Under various guises a goodly portion of the 1,500,000,000 pounds of cottonseed oil produced each year comes onto the American table as food; the public uses another portion as soap; another, in a modified form, as insulation on electric wires. As an oil carrier for pigments it is creeping into the paint business. Researchers report that vigorous chemical treatment transforms it into a highly desirable material for plastics. Eventually the seed may become the raison d'être of the cotton business.

For a number of years tung oil—China wood oil—has been a highly important drying agent in the paint and varnish industry in this country. Originally it was all imported from China. But about 15 years ago a few tung trees were planted experimentally in some of our southern states. These flourished so well, reached the nut-bearing stage so quickly (in five to six years) and were so satisfactory in the quality of the oil ex-

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tracted from the seeds that there are now thousands of acres of young tung orchards in the South. If our industrial needs, even at this stage, are to be met these thousands should be increased to half a million. Later on, when the multitudinous possibilities research workers say are latent in this oil are more fully realized, we shall probably need far more extensive tung orchards. Its use is gradually being extended, for instance, out of the field of paints and varnishes into that of plastics such as linoleums. Experimentally the oil has shown promise of becoming a major material in the manufacture of synthetic resins. One experimenter has discovered that when glycerine and tung oil are treated together at a high temperature, something approximating rubber is created. This may not amount to much, yet it is worth investigating.

But in castor oil (used as a lubricant for airplane engines in the first World War) tung oil has a rival. About eight years ago a manufacturer in this country developed a process which, by slightly modifying the chemical structure of castor oil, converted it into a drying agent almost as good as tung oil and less expensive. The leaves of the castor plant are used as the base for one of our most lethal insecticides. And, going over into a completely different field, castor oil might even be a factor in fine fabrics. The E. I. du Pont de Nemours Company's much-heralded nylon uses coal, air and water as raw materials; but one of the principal intermediate constituents in the synthesis of nylon can easily be obtained from castor oil. If this oil could be procured cheaply enough it might enter the nylon field.

At present most of our castor beans come from Brazil, but American farmers, particularly those in the South, could raise them. In the tropics the old plants bear year after year whereas in most sections of the United States they are killed by frost. To offset the ever-bearing quality of the Brazilian plant, practical botanists could probably develop an annual for this country that would give a high yield. Failing that it could be grown as a perennial in the sub-tropical parts of the South. In either case it promises new income for at least some American farmers.

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In China, soy is the "honorable little bean." For thousands of years it has been used there as a food for mankind. In the United States—until recently—it was occasionally grown and begrudgingly used only as cow-feed. Slowly it has crept into small use here as a human food, but the great expansion has been in the field of chemical industry. The Ford car is its largest traveling exhibit. The beans are squeezed to produce an oil used as a binder for sand molds in the foundry. A portion of the residue is treated with a solvent to remove a material which is a vehicle for lacquer. The remaining residue is largely protein (similar to the casein of milk) and fiber and these are turned into the highly satisfactory plastic resins out of which the horn buttons, light-switch handles, distributor covers, window trim etc. are manufactured. In every Ford car there are several pounds of soybeans. In 1938 the research laboratories of the Ford Company succeeded in making synthetic fibers from the soybean. These fibers (recently improved in quality) are similar to the wool substitute "Lanital" now being manufactured in Italy from cows' milk.

In paint, paper, lacquers, fabrics, plastics, not to mention human and animal food, the honorable little bean seems destined for a great future—and it may mean a profitable future for many farmers.

Throughout this entire discussion I have repeatedly said that chemurgy's possibilities can be realized only if the raw materials of the farm are available at low cost. This cannot be too much emphasized. Almost every raw material has its rival. It may be coal, petroleum, a plant, gas or some metal. In this modern manufacturing world the use or non-use of any particular substance usually comes down to a matter of price. The farmer gets the raw materials of his process for very little or nothing. Except for the 2 to 3 per cent of minerals actually extracted from the soil, all plant growth is simply moist air transformed by sunshine into solid substance. The principal cost of production lies in the handling—the planting, cultivating, harvesting. If the American farmer takes the fullest possible advantage of

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efficient mechanical methods he can produce his crops at a price at which industry not only can but will be glad to take them as the raw materials of a chemurgic industry.

If the farm problem is attacked through chemurgy there must be a complete reversal of political attitude. Instead of using artificial and political means to secure the highest possible price the farmer must strive to bring the cost of his products down and down until the great new potential markets automatically open up for him.

This means that modern, scientific, large-scale mechanical operations will have to become universal on all and not just on some farms—all farms, that is, that hope to operate at a profit. Although in the last century agricultural productivity per man has risen greatly it has lagged far behind that in the manufacturing industries. To achieve a high standard of living the farmer must keep pace with industry; as a matter of fact farming is an industry. In the degree to which agriculture realizes this and begins to conduct itself as an industry it can begin to see the silver lining. The old-time inefficient, subsistence philosophy of the farm will simply have to go if the farmer is to hope for a standard of living comparable with that of manufacturing folk. The small, one-family farm as an individual unit will disappear.

In the interests of efficiency the farm industry will have to be operated in units large enough to withstand a heavy capital investment in machines and spread the use of those machines over the years; it will have to draw upon the services of experts both for management and for the scientific solution of a multitude of technical problems. This may mean large-scale, closely-managed cooperatives; it may mean corporations on the industrial model; it may mean a combination of several plans. Ultimately the structure will evolve into some sensible pattern.

This implies some unpleasant things. It suggests that the farmer will be faced with the insecurity, the loss of control over his own life, the regimentation of the present-day factory worker. Admittedly he will be unless these industrial problems

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are solved. There is, however, no way whereby these problems, industrial or agricultural, may be evaded. Eventually a satisfactory solution can, I believe, be worked out; but the path will not be easy. Perhaps the farmer can bring to these perplexing questions a new point of view that will help in finding an answer for all of industry.

Moreover farming as a distinctive pattern of life is on the way out—a prospect the rural sociologist is loath to face, for the farm has traditionally been a sociological reservoir of the nation. Are individual control of the land and farming as a distinctive way of life necessary for our sociological health? If they are we should begin looking for adequate substitutes, for they are probably doomed.

On the more technical front we must take steps to circumvent depletion of the land; for removing materials on an industrial scale from the soil to manufacturing plants could quickly bring us to complete soil sterility. We must make an intelligent and complete use of all available knowledge of artificial fertilizers and of soil crop-control. When we start changing the time-honored balance of nature we are forced to move carefully and to plan every step. This will call for expert guidance—and rigid control—even if it means more and more governmental interference.

I have looked at the evidence from all sides and have studied it carefully. And I believe, with some nostalgia for the old farm pattern (for I was reared in a farm environment of the inefficient, individualistic tradition), the evidence indicates that in chemurgy lies the possibility, almost the certainty, of revolutionizing agriculture. But there will be new problems, bitter arguments, the loss of many things once held dear. And after we have passed through this revolution the old farm as a place of grinding hard work or of subsistence existence will be no more.

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Chinese Universities on the March

PEI-SUNG TANG

WHEN the universities and other institutions of higher learning in China had to scurry away from the war zones in the summer of 1937 with the enemy close at their heels much of what was in the fine laboratories and libraries had to be left behind. One may to this day purchase from street vendors rare editions sold by the pound with old magazines, and microscopes are sold as scrap iron. Since the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war no fewer than 77 universities have moved from their original sites in the occupied areas thousands of miles to the interior of China. But mere statistics do not reveal the pathos, the romance and the spiritual significance of this migration of a civilization.

With what little equipment they brought, these universities, if they may be so called, settled in various hitherto unheard of places, housing themselves in wooden sheds or mud huts more like summer cottages than university structures and began stoically carrying on their mission of preserving and passing on the fruits of human achievements. In their improvised laboratories, without running water or gas and sometimes without even electricity, science is being taught and research is being carried on. We are, so to speak, having the unique experience of defying the unidirectional flow of time and have reversed a hundred years or more to relive the history of science. We are carried back from the age of pyrex glass and aluminum to the age of wood and pottery. The glitter of chromium is replaced by the somber hues of bamboo, wood and crockery.

Necessity has forced us to adapt crude and ancient implements to modern science. From old kerosene tins and cratings

An essay written on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the founding of Tsing Hua College, and in honor of President Mei Yi-chi's 25 years of service to that University.

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are made thermostats, incubators, sterilizers, sinks, laboratory benches and furniture. Thermostatic relays are created from doorbells and flashlight batteries, and old electric fans serve admirably as stirrers. For liquids, utensils made of glazed pottery and paraffined tin cans serve the same purpose as beakers and watch glasses, and chopsticks are much cheaper and more handy for the Chinese than crucible tongs. Water may be piped through hollow bamboo almost as conveniently as through iron and the abacus is a cheaper and far more universal means of calculation than an electric adding machine. Chemical ignition is performed with a plumber's blowtorch and an opium smoker's lamp serves as an excellent microburner. In one of the universities electric power was supplied by converting the engine of an old truck into a motor generator; and an alcohol plant constructed with five-gallon kerosene cans, and with its fractionating column made of old cigarette tins, is supplying absolute alcohol to the biologists of the country.

In the biological laboratories vegetable wax is a good substitute for imported paraffin and eucalyptus oil is as good a clearing agent as xylol. Cover glasses are expensive but mica sheets are abundant in southwestern China. In the field, biologists and geologists are roaming over virgin lands in search of useful minerals, animals and plants. For the first time the country is awakened to the unlimited potentialities of vegetable oils—in the production of which China leads the world. And the almost miraculous curative effects of herb medicines are being exploited to the full. Physiologists are substituting soybean milk for that of the cow and native oranges are displacing the market previously occupied by oranges from America. In the chemical laboratories elementary principles of chemistry may be learned from the purification of native salt, mercury and other minerals, while organic synthesis may be taught by using castor oil as the basic material. The major effort of chemical research is directed toward the finding of substitutes, especially for gasoline and lubricants. Lacking facilities for continuing their experiments in atomic physics, our physicists either resign

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themselves to speculation on the architecture of the universe or turn their energies to shortwave radio transmission and to the practical aspects of optics.

Everywhere the trend is toward the application of scientific knowledge to the solution of national needs. Economists are now cooperating with natural scientists to meet situations arising from the blockade and to plan for a gigantic program of national reconstruction after the war. The theme for the coming meeting of the Science Society, which is the Chinese equivalent of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, will probably be "Science and National Affairs"—a discussion of means of meeting China's technical and scientific needs through the application of scientific principles.

But attention to the academic aspects of science has not been swept entirely away by the torrent of practical applications. Here and there, under a leaking roof or in the shadows of tall eucalyptus trees, one may listen to discussions of the theory of oxidation of pyruvic acid by the cell or to a report on the synthesis of a new hormone. One of our ablest physicists has just published a critical review summarizing experiments on the vibrational spectra and the structure of polyatomic molecules. Heavy water is being studied. In the field of biophysics a treatise on the thermodynamics of the relationships of water within the living cell has cleared up much that was ambiguous in that branch of physiology.

Our scientific friends may lament and even laugh at the folly of labelling so many practical investigations with the dignified term, scientific research. But to us who are living in this artificial period of scientific history these developments have a deeper meaning. Forced to use science as a tool for the solution of many vital needs of our country, living in a period like that in which Newton, Darwin, Harvey and Priestley lived, science has become a thing tangible and realistic to us, and for the first time it has become endemic to our land. We are succeeding, so to speak, in digesting and absorbing what was previously only something to be admired and wondered at from a distance.

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Science in China has just now emerged from the textbook period. Many of us are beginning to realize that science is a system built in our own minds with the earth and the stars as material, and that for its construction only a surprisingly few and simple materials are necessary. Nature is full of wonderful treasures for the mind that is prepared, for the hand that is skilled. It is in times like ours, and in circumstances such as these in which we find ourselves, that such beautifully simple experiments as those suggested in Irving Langmuir's essay, "Simple Excursions in Science," are most keenly appreciated.

Important to the development of science in China as the present migration of the universities is, it has a still greater significance for the philosophical outlook of Chinese youth and of all thoughtful Chinese. When so many university students, who had been the spoiled darlings of the country, trailed on foot hundreds of miles over the mountainous highways from Changsha to Kunming, China's youth came of age. Deprived of most of the privileges they had enjoyed without awareness in the past, these young people have become more appreciative of the few privileges left to them. Youth has become accustomed to hardship and is beginning to face the realities of life independently. United against a common foe and faced with the ever-present threat of sudden and violent death at the sound of the air-raid siren, the Chinese people, young and old, are developing a deep interest in national affairs and a keen sense of personal responsibility. And they are learning the gracious virtue of tolerance.

That westward march of university students was an education in itself. Narrow dirt roads, called highways only because trucks may be driven over them, wind literally thousands of feet up and down in staircase fashion over steep mountain ridges and along cliffs where properly placed bridges might have saved much power and many a human life. Violating all rules of highway engineering these roads, with grades sometimes much steeper than 15 per cent, abound in sharp U-, S- or even Z-shaped bends. Laid out and constructed in the years

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preceding the present period of hostilities, the manner of their building was very primitive indeed. Many of the laborers were women and children working under the direction of young men just out of the universities who had little experience but plenty of sheer courage and determination. Fortunately these roads (many of them built through malaria-infested areas) were ready for traffic when the westward migration was forced upon our people. Little did their builders dream they would so soon become the arteries of the nation along which would flow its lifeblood—with corpuscles in the form of motor trucks laden with armaments, gasoline, tung oil, tungsten and many other essentials for the new China coming into being in what was then in many long stretches a sparsely settled wilderness.

That historic march brought students and teachers into unaccustomed intimacy with nature and reality. There were few facilities for creature comforts but the route abounded in intellectual stimulation of many kinds. The difficulties of travel added to bitter struggles with the elements played an important part in mellowing the students' minds and in developing those ties which fasten man to his fellow men. Much geology and biology was learned first-hand in that migration from sea level to altitudes of snow-capped peaks. Massive clouds drifting against the setting sun, gorgeous displays of lilies and bluebells and forget-me-nots, the blue lakes and rushing waterfalls and the cathedral-like magnificence of the limestone caverns would make a poet sing. Endless stretches of the wildest mountain scenery could not fail to impress the mind with the vastness of nature and the insignificance of human life.

After two months of travel the students finally reached their destination in Kunming. But life on the campus here is by no means a bed of roses. Ill-housed and underfed, these students, who were probably the most privileged youths of the country before the war, are packed double-deck in mud sheds and must cultivate their own vegetables and go without socks. Hundreds of our fine young men, not satisfied with a passive academic life, have entered the army and are serving in the

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air force, in the mechanized units or in other divisions. Sometimes they return for short periods, proud to display their uniforms and their stunts to friends or parents. During air raids our students, even those of the middle school, exhibit wonderful courage in rescuing the wounded or in guarding the school properties. And hundreds of our best medical graduates are forsaking lucrative practices and comfortable posts to serve on the technical and medical staffs of the Red Cross at the front.

Except for occasional concerts and plays life at the new universities in the interior is rather colorless. But nearby teahouses furnish a new kind of social life. Unable to find needed space in the poorly-lighted dormitories, students crowd into the teahouses in the evening to study. Paying a few coppers for a cup of tea they enjoy the tables and the much-coveted electric light; in groups of three to five they study and discuss their lessons amidst the singing and chatter of idling coolies. These evening hours will be remembered long after the war is over.

The members of the university faculties are little better off than the students. Many of us who in pre-war times enjoyed a life of comparative security and comfort are now faced with the very real problem of keeping body and soul together. We no longer apologize for unpressed suits or unpolished shoes and we are tactful enough not to visit friends when it is too close to mealtime. With many of our most able men entering industry and commerce there is a definite change in the attitude of the intelligentsia toward the realistic and the practical. A former society girl is running a prosperous flower shop in Kunming, wives of professors earn pin-money by managing little restaurants and several assistants in one of the engineering colleges are operating very profitable foundries, machine shops or sawmills in their spare time. There is a readjustment of technical and academic personnel, a shift toward the technical and the industrial and away from the theoretical and purely academic. Although the loss of trained men will be felt keenly by the universities, the change in the equilibrium marks a beginning of a significant new era in the social and economic life of

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the Chinese. Commerce and industry are receiving a new impetus, and men in business and men who work with their hands are coming to enjoy a position equal in prestige to that of men who work with their brains.

In scale, in distance and in the brief span of time allotted to it the present migration of the Chinese people into the interior of the country is perhaps without equal in the history of civilized man. It might be compared with the migration of Americans in the pioneer days, but it differs in many ways. Whereas the American pioneers moved westward voluntarily, impelled by the promise of wealth and adventure, the Chinese are compelled to move for the sake of preserving the best their country possesses. Hence the types of people settling in the interior differ from those who settled in the western parts of America. American pioneers could afford to build a culture slowly but the migrating Chinese have brought with them a culture already built; they are transplanting it to a practically virgin soil. The slow westward migration of the Americans marked an important step in the development of the United States; the migration of the Chinese to the interior promises to be of equally great significance for China. Already a new philosophical outlook is developing in the minds of the Chinese, and particularly in the minds of its youth; a new social and economic order, and even a new moral code, are in the making. If the Chinese people and Chinese civilization can pass through this critical period of transplantation and become adapted to the new environment they will not only survive but will blossom out into a fuller splendor in time to come.

As these lines are being written a Japanese attack on Indo-China seems imminent.[1] Should the Japanese occupy that country we shall be in danger of an invasion from that direction. But the region where we are at the moment living, once considered farthest from the war zones and therefore safest, is now being transformed into a semi-military area. When the present rainy season ends Japanese airplanes may begin to

[1] The manuscript was mailed from Kunming, China on August 16, 1940.

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unload their daily shower of bombs on Kunming. The same thing that happened to the institutions of higher learning in Chungking and other more eastern cities may overtake us here. We may have to move still farther inland and relive our life of the past three years, doing everything over again—only under perhaps even greater difficulties. Should that be required of us we are ready and willing, for we live in hope of better years to come and we are not discouraged. What has been accomplished can be repeated. We have great faith in our country, in our people and in ourselves.

The Curtain of Rain

CHARLES EDWARD EATON

There is rain upon the roof and the dark
Colors of night are in the room. The faces
Of the listeners are pale in the darkness.
They listen to the rain as did their mothers,
They sit in the dark as did their fathers.
Sound of rain has been centuries long
Soft to the hearers. Always they have listened
For discord in the rainfall that would shatter
The monotone of time, that would break
The extended harmony of nature;
For the tirelessness of rain is tiring
To the hearer. A discord in its falling
Would be freedom to the senses. But the rain
Falls upon the snow and the green of spring,
Not in torrents, not in gushes, but dropping
Just as time falls, one moment on the other,
Lulling the senses, turning the brain
In rutted circles. Now in the darkness
The past sits with the present hearing the rain.
Drawn are the faces with awaiting the hearer
Who shall detect the discord, recapture
The freedom that long ages have deadened,
Who shall tear the curtain of rain into light.

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The Historical Position of Liberalism

GEORGE H. SABINE

TO GIVE a definition of liberalism is practically impossible. The name has been attached to many reforms and policies and even to more than one political philosophy. Its history is strewn with the wreckage of constitutional devices and political apparatus all of which proved disappointing in the light of the ardent hopes they once inspired. The separation of powers, the priority of the legislative power, the independence of the judiciary, the extension of the suffrage, economic individualism, have all been important parts of historical liberalism, but they are not of its essence. The historical position of liberalism cannot be discussed at all if liberalism is identified with a set of supposedly unchangeable institutions. Rather, it has been an attitude toward political institutions and public questions and a philosophy of the social relationships on which these institutions depend. Even that philosophy cannot be fully outlined in a short essay. It seems best, therefore, to select a single phase of liberal philosophy; to find a focus or a center around which its subsidiary doctrines arrange themselves. Even in respect to this central principle, however, liberalism has been by no means static. It has moved under the impact of its experience in applying its own ideal. Doubtless it must do so still if it is to persist.

Throughout its history liberalism has been first and foremost a belief in the supreme social value of intelligence. This belief itself included several related, but distinguishable, ideas.

First, it included a belief in the utility of intelligence or reason as a force in social and political change. Institutions require constantly to be renewed, for custom is inert and the undirected drift of institutions is blind. From Locke to John Dewey

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liberals have regarded intelligence as the only reliable means of directing social change. Liberalism as a social doctrine was only one side of a much larger idea, very characteristic of modern philosophy, which Francis Bacon summed up in his aphorism, "Knowledge is power." The fact-finding investigation used as a guide to legislation—for example such work as Edwin Chadwick began for the English Poor Law Commission a century ago—might almost be called a liberal invention.

In the second place, however, liberals never believed that social intelligence could be made either safe or effective if it were monopolized by experts. Behind the expert there must be an informed and critical public opinion, for some vital questions in politics cannot be left to experts. An intelligent man who has to live with political institutions ought to be able to form some judgment of them. In Aristotle's homely comparison he need not be a cook to know whether his dinner pleases him. Moreover there has to be some guarantee that expert knowledge will be put to useful purposes, and liberals have always insisted that the only effective guarantee of this lies in the general intelligence of the community for which the experts work. Even Machiavelli, no great liberal, insisted that on the right kind of question public opinion is a safer guide to sound policy than the opinion of princes.

In the third place liberals have argued there is only one way to have an intelligent public opinion and that is by allowing free and open discussion, because knowledge about public questions is like all knowledge: it is never finished and it advances by pooling and criticizing many opinions. To have such discussion every interest should have the right to air its grievances and state its own case. No man, and no class of men, is either good enough or wise enough to be the irresponsible guardian of other men's interests. Obviously the liberal must assume that the common fund of intelligence and good will is great enough to insure that free discussion will in general issue in a wise decision. He has argued, of course, that after all allowances have been made for failures there is no better criterion of wisdom than what

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Justice Holmes called the market value of an idea. The civil liberties necessary to free discussion, therefore, are the foundations of liberalism; political liberties and liberal institutions follow them. For public opinion is useless unless it has some leverage to influence government and to hold rulers responsible for their acts.

I have purposely left until last, however, the moral aspect of the liberal belief in intelligence because this is in reality the crux of the matter. Liberals were actuated by a profound moral conviction that intelligence is the core of personality, the distinctively human faculty in man and the part of him that could not be limited without crippling all his higher powers. Hence it is a moral postulate that men have a right to be convinced, to understand and evaluate the demands laid on them and if possible to consent to them. This is at bottom a moral preference for a kind of character in which action flows from conviction and conviction is reached by intelligent consideration of means and ends. The whole liberal doctrine of freedom rests upon the belief that normal men can in some degree achieve this kind of character, that they become morally self-directing in the degree to which they do so and that their power to enjoy and contribute to a civilized life depends chiefly on their having such a character. They become social beings in proportion as they have it. Consequently the declared object of liberal reform has always been the removal of hindrances to this kind of living. So true is this that it is hard to see how liberalism could survive if this sort of moral preference were radically to diminish.

Now it must in frankness be admitted that this high valuation set on intelligence and the belief in its social worth are not inevitable, in the sense that everyone invariably shares them. The proposition can be denied and in fact is denied. It is denied outright by the counter belief that societies are made good and great by a demonic will that is not controlled or directed by intelligence but serves the inner drive of national or racial instinct. It can be denied in effect by the assertion that, however desirable reasonableness may be, most men are incapable of

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attaining it in a degree sufficient to make it an appreciable force in social and political matters. It is denied in practice by acting on the supposition that the consent and conviction required for social cohesiveness are more surely produced by suggestion and propaganda than by appealing to intelligence. In order to be effective liberalism must face these counterclaims and come to some sort of terms with them. It cannot refuse to consider realistically how intelligence can be evoked and put to work. For even intelligence is no God-given faculty. Like everything else it has its conditions, and there are other conditions that make it impossible or nugatory. Liberalism itself has taken two different attitudes toward this question. Fundamentally the difference lies between the two ideas about what are the great hindrances to free and rational living.

The first period of liberalism was that in which its purpose was to protect individual freedom against oppressive governments. In this period liberals sought to put fundamental liberties beyond the reach of distrusted governments, to secure the completest possible freedom of business enterprise, to extend the suffrage, to increase the power of popularly elected representatives and to draw up constitutions having an elaborate system of checks and balances. It was a liberal axiom that governments are best when they govern least and that in a good society every man will have the greatest amount of freedom compatible with keeping peace and order. Around every individual there is a circle of rights within which he must be protected not only from the incursions of other individuals but more particularly from the incursions of the government set up to protect him. The ideal relationship in a free society is contract, for here the individual freely binds himself and assumes voluntarily the obligations to which he may rightly be held.

In promulgating this program liberalism was undoubtedly effective. Governments *were* oppressive and the need for political and civil liberty corresponded so obviously to the requirements of the time that it was one of the great driving forces of reform.

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But this theory of political and economic freedom depended upon a certain idea about the way in which intelligence could be made socially effective. Moreover though that idea was perhaps true enough to work, the circumstances being what they were, it eventually reached the limit of its workability and had to be revised. The liberal picture of society was extraordinarily intellectualized. Every individual was believed to act only in the light of his greatest advantage; each understood what his interest was or could be made to do so by education; each was able to attain his interests if only the government left him to himself. But though human beings were represented almost as calculating machines the role of intelligence in society was singularly and arbitrarily restricted. Every single item of human behavior was computed down to the least increment of pleasure but its integration into an effective social whole was imagined to be the almost miraculous result of natural harmony, which apparently worked best when no one thought about it at all. Reason was looked upon as an individual faculty with which men were simply endowed; it was treated as though it had no social antecedents other than the absence of restraint and as though its social consequences accrued indirectly and deviously through the beneficence of enlightened self-interest.

Everyone knows how this older type of liberalism suffered shipwreck. Long before it was abandoned in theory it was eaten away by social legislation written largely under the rising influence of organized labor. In every case this legislation was a restriction upon freedom of contract though its intent was clearly liberal in the sense that it sought to extend the opportunities for a better standard of living. To keep oneself and one's family in health, to have education and to educate one's children, to work in safety and to enjoy a reasonable security and leisure—surely these opportunities were liberties if anything was. The day was long past when it was possible to assume the most serious hindrances to freedom were governments, or that it was feasible to exclude government from whole areas of modern social and economic life. Consequently when a new

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upswing of liberalism occurred in 1914 shortly before the War it took a definitely new line. It argued that liberty is not a negation, the right not to be interfered with, but an opportunity to enjoy and achieve something intrinsically satisfying and worth doing.

This change of purpose represented another step in the experience of liberalism with its fundamental postulate, the belief in the social value of intelligence. In the first place it implied that an intelligently ordered society must be envisaged as a whole; must, if you like, be planned. For it is evidently not reasonable to suppose that even the most intelligent self-interest will work out automatically into intelligent cooperation unless intelligence be applied also to the relationships that produce cooperation. And in the second place it assumed that neither intelligent self-interest nor intelligent public opinion can arise or work in a society failing to provide the conditions for them. The older liberal notion that self-help and individual initiative will of themselves lift whole classes out of a state of misery had been proved a myth. Neither native capacity nor the development of native capacity can be regarded as the properties merely of an individual person. They depend upon external conditions—material, moral and intellectual—within which they must be developed and over which, except to a limited extent, voluntary choice and effort have no control. Whether a man has intelligence or is able to use it to any purpose is inherent in the state of the society in which he lives. In consequence, though intelligence may be socially beneficent, it is no panacea because without an adequate moral and social underpinning it will infallibly fail to assert itself.

This conclusion, it is important to notice, was inherent in the internal development of liberal thought itself, not something foisted on it from the outside. It suggests a major reason for asking about the prospects of liberalism in the present and future. Is it possible, in a time of great social and political stress, to make a vigorous attack on contemporary problems without discarding liberalism? Is not liberalism, as is often asserted, a

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philosophy for political fair weather which is bound to be superseded in a revolutionary era? To be frank I do not see how a liberal can be quite certain in advance that this will not prove to be true in a given case. There unquestionably is a point, in any society that approaches political or economic paralysis, at which the processes of liberal government become impossible. Where this point will lie depends partly on the severity of the crisis and partly on the degree to which compromise and cooperation have become well-settled political habits. The latter in turn depends largely upon the amount of experience a people has had in making liberal institutions work. Where this is considerable a liberal can claim at least a reasonable probability for the assumption that the fund of intelligence and good will is great enough to permit a peaceful settlement of pretty fundamental issues. No one will deny that so long as this is plausible at all it is the best working hypothesis. At the same time it is a matter of elementary precaution, where liberal governments still exist, not to palter with conditions that reduce the factor of safety. Safety lies not in repression but in prevention.

This amounts to saying that the persistence of liberalism depends in no small degree on the will of liberals. The low esteem in which liberalism is now so often held depends, unless I am mistaken, on the suspicion that although liberals talk about removing the hindrances to opportunity and the good life they cannot be depended on to do anything about it. There is also the suspicion that they have never really counted the cost of even approximating their ideal and that they are inhibited by a kind of nostalgia for the older forms of economic individualism, even though they know these are impossible. In a period of political difficulty this is the most injurious of reputations. Where liberalism has been destroyed there has always been a conviction that liberal government is feeble. In the days when liberalism was strong it certainly had no such reputation; it was strong precisely because it combined the two qualities of intelligence and will. And this combination is one of the conditions for the effective persistence of any political philosophy. It must be at

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once an analysis of remediable grievances, a program of intelligent adjustment, and an incitement to go forward on the line the program marks out.

Though liberalism is rather an attitude toward political questions than a specific set of institutions it cannot coexist with any and all kinds of institutions. In the liberal conception politics is essentially a medium in which grievances may be aired and their redress sought. Consequently the essential institution of liberal politics is the opposition. It is the critic and the competitor of the government and its potential successor. There is no known device for insuring this opposition except political parties and the various forms of free association through which political parties can be influenced. Liberalism cannot be imagined as existing in any of the governments permitting only a single party. It is quite true, however, that the existence of political parties is no infallible assurance of the continuance of liberal government, for there have been only too many cases in recent history of parties designed expressly to destroy other parties and the liberal system through which political parties have to work. A civil society in which large numbers of persons can be attracted into parties dedicated to the tactics of rule or ruin has passed beyond the stage in which a liberal government is possible.

This fact brings the analysis of liberalism back to the point already stressed. The liberal belief that government ought to depend on intelligent decisions formed in the light of free discussion depends upon a moral presumption from which it cannot escape. Discussion and the formation of an intelligent public opinion are possible only on the basis of fair dealing and mutual respect. The sense of unity that holds parties and factions together in a civil society must be strong enough to overlap and include the divergent and separatist interests of the parties. Without this element of moral restraint political tactics become simple terrorism. This amounts to saying that the ultimate basis of civil society is an intangible but effective moral community holding its members together, and that liberalism is possible only

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so long as this is so generally acknowledged that no considerable number of persons refuses to act on it. Obviously this moral basis of government can fail, and does fail when the stresses and strains upon a political society become too great. When it fails there is no substitute for it—least of all a substitute that will support liberalism. In time it may perhaps restore itself but there is no known technique for re-creating it. The most that liberal statesmanship can hope to do, where liberal statesmanship exists, is to prevent if it can a breaking down of the political and economic structure that brings this moral degeneration with it.

The crux of the question about the present position of liberalism lies, I believe, in the region of economic liberalism. For the test of any present political movement is its capacity to deal constructively with the economic paralysis that from time to time threatens modern society. The burden of insecurity arising from this condition forms the head and front of the grievances now requiring relief. No government has dared or will dare to refuse the responsibility for finding this relief. Can there be a social situation more dangerous to the foundations of a liberal society than one in which a considerable proportion of young men and women upon the completion of their education find no work to be done, no satisfying career in which they can expend the energies natural to their age and no means of gaining a competence that will permit them to set up families? Or again, can there be a situation more morally corroding than one in which considerable numbers of men and women with no deficiency of training or skill or willingness to work can find no employment offering security for themselves and their families? For this situation quasi-charitable relief is no solution even though it be the best stopgap available. For though it provides the minimum essential for life it does not remove the sense of frustration which inclines men to desperate remedies. Nor is it to be expected that this burden will be borne with the resignation which human beings can always muster to face an inevitable evil, for they do not accept it as inevitable. They suspect there

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are faults in the institutional structure of modern economy which act as a clog on the social power of production and as a bar to a more equitable distribution; and there is a growing belief that political action, if sufficiently wise and vigorous, can modify and improve that institutional structure.

This hope and belief are by no means confined to peoples living under those governments it is now the fashion to call democracies. It is an even more powerful motive where, for one reason or another, political and economic systems have come close to shipwreck and where great portions of the middle class have found themselves dispossessed of the security they formerly had. Over large parts of Europe some sort of social revolution is in progress in which the drive of social idealism is furnished by just this aspiration for greater security, with all that security might mean for human happiness and humane living. There is unfortunately no guarantee that this inchoate idealism will find a wise or an effective outlet. It can be exploited by ignorant and unscrupulous leadership. It can be fobbed off with security at a miserable level of mere subsistence because production is turned to ends which destroy the possibility of a humane life. It can pursue security with a reckless disregard for civil and political rights without which its own success cannot be permanently insured.

But must these disasters befall the honorable hope that an increasing number of men may enter securely into the heritage of modern civilization? Whatever the answer to this question may be, the future, I believe, belongs in fact to the social philosophy, liberalism or another, that makes itself the accepted spokesman and the vigorous exponent of this present hope. Whether liberalism can hold, in the present and the future, a place consonant with its great tradition depends on its power to commend itself as the better course by which to realize this hope.

The promises are theirs who take them.

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When Will the Poets Speak?

JOHN ERSKINE

WHAT has become of our poets? The question rises in other lands also, but it is enough for us to ask it of ourselves.

Only a few years ago, as it seems, we were welcoming new voices, we were thanking our stars we had lived to see deep and genuine emotions break their way out in accents and cadences which belonged to us. Edgar Lee Masters was creating the *Spoon River Anthology*, with its challenges of mordant truth and poignant vision; Frost was championing the New England soil, the whole American landscape, with a new sensitiveness to man and to nature; Robinson, that quiet but resolute prober of human heart and mind, was compelling us, in a day that would rather have been superficial, to look inward; Sandburg was making articulate the vigor and frankness long expected from the unencumbered West; Vachel Lindsay, the lovable minstrel, was chanting his ballads from city to city; Edna Millay was transmuting into magic the revolt of the younger generation; Elinor Wiley was stirring us with her exotic blend of thought and fancy; and Amy Lowell, brilliant and brave, was dragooning all sluggish versemakers into a belated consideration of certain principles of their art.

Only a few years ago, as it seems, we were warmed by this kindling and we indulged in hopeful guesses about the poets who might next emerge, who would carry far, thanks to these pioneers and the audience they had prepared. But the new voices are not yet heard. Two or three of the pioneers are faithful to their beginnings. Some have stopped singing. Some are dead.

We need not be discouraged by the silence; there are cycles of depression in poetry as well as in economics. But we should

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at least be concerned, and in the spiritual world as well as the material we might seek the causes of our recurring poverties. Why do our depressions occur in the midst of plenty? Seldom have there been more thoughts, emotions, aspirations, stirring in the world, deep impulses that should emerge in poetry, impulses of the kind we call primitive. Men and women are reexamining their convictions about love, about nature, about religion, about patriotism, about war and peace, about justice, about wealth and poverty. Our opinions on these themes, however divided, are not completely expressed by the older poets; we need our own spokesmen.

If the spokesmen are slow in appearing there are reasons for their hesitation. With every great liberation and growth of the human spirit there is at first a silence among the poets, minor versifiers being overwhelmed by their own inadequacy, larger talents needing a moment to gather their forces, to study their age, to clarify and mature their vision. Athens was well on the way to greatness before her poets, dramatists and philosophers announced what made her great. Edmund Spenser in his first book mourned the death of all poetry, and this only the day before Marlowe, Greene and the other marvelous companions sounded the overture for Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher and Milton.

If the poets are silent today perhaps it is because they are busy thinking. They have plenty to think about. Consider those central and eternal subjects which even the unpoetical are now forced to reexamine. What will the poets in the new revival say about love? There will always be lovers but today they are making a new definition of their experience which they will expect the coming poets to express. The old and famous love stories will still be treasured but in important details they are no longer our stories. Even in our times the new programs for love and lovers are soon antiquated. Youth today is out of tune with the Greenwich Village of 20 years ago.

What interpretations of nature and of religion will satisfy us? Can we rediscover in nature, as Rousseau thought we

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could, a perfection too long overlooked? Or shall we take Wordsworth's view, modified by Emerson, and say that nature, though indifferent to us and ruthless when not cruel, is yet the great teacher of the soul, and her apparent shortcomings are part of the divine discipline? Or must we accept for mankind the grim theories of the Darwinians, and see in a brutal struggle for existence the shadow of our own fate? Too many of our poets, appalled by the issue, are content to celebrate the coming of Spring, the miracle of their private gardens, their delight in lily and rose. But we know that nature is more than that. We still have earthquakes and floods and drought. The poets of prettiness are dodging issues.

Timidity is harder to forgive when the poets speak of religion or decline to speak of it. All men at all times worship an ideal, whether they define it as a creator, or as a prophet or savior, or as their favorite economic system, or as the ruler of their state. In fairness to the timid poet we admit that in any audience which he addresses these various philosophies elbow each other. Even if he would be spokesman for a church or a creed, for a group of human beings who profess devotion to a single faith, he must wrestle with the fact that they do not at all points agree with each other, they tend to divide into factions or sects, and where they are in accord they shift the emphasis, with advancing years, from one doctrine to another. The intellect likes to occupy new ground, the heart clings to old pieties, and those pieties are already expressed by the poets of yesterday whose heart and mind were in step. Yet the poet must speak for us all, or fail in his calling.

The other themes of poetry are confused today by the same spirit of division and debate. Ours is not the only epoch of critical self-examination, and with thoughtful patience we like other men before us may achieve our own vision, unified and clear. But the thoughtfulness as well as the patience is necessary. The confusion will not rearrange itself. We must say, for example, what we mean by patriotism. Since the glamor of war is seen to be a hideous delusion the buccaneering type of

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patriot who would have us demonstrate our superiority by quarreling with our neighbors must disguise his argument shrewdly before we will listen to him. Moreover we are learning, however slowly, to think of mankind as our family and to temper our selfishness with some thought of the relatives. Yet pacifism, in the form in which it usually makes its appeal even to the generosity of youth, is a negative ideal, an enthusiasm for staying out of the battle, too seldom a prolonged and concerted effort to end the rivalries which bring on the fight. If war is no longer a theme for poetry, is peace, our kind of peace, more inspiring? If our poets avoid both subjects what can they say of patriotism?

We are particularly busy nowadays revising our ideas of wealth and poverty. There is an essential agreement the world over that wealth is desirable, and the liberal-minded wish the division of it to be more nearly just; but the poets, though they share the advanced ideals, are not disposed to celebrate the virtue of being rich, not even of being comfortable in modest circumstances. Perhaps they are troubled by the thought that something can be said for poverty. They may remember the Irish proverb that where there is nothing there is God. The proverb may have been invented for purposes of consolation, but it implies the other truth that the presence of God is seldom noticed among those who have a great deal. Francis of Assisi, poet and saint, worshiped poverty. But today the poets might too easily be misunderstood if they ranged themselves with St. Francis. They might seem to be speaking, not for the saintly ideal but for the complacency of those rich folk who, themselves beyond the threat of want, tell their fellows that poverty should be a spur to harder work and more thrift and that adversity strengthens the character. Sound doctrine, the poets probably think, but not for all men to preach.

These separate illustrations all point to one underlying difficulty which poetry now faces. We have reached the end of a chapter and the world is fitting itself out with a new philosophy of history. In some countries the change is directed openly

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and officially by the state and the people are instructed in a single conception of their destiny. Where thought is still comparatively free the change is accompanied by a more apparent groping. The poet can hardly speak to great issues until he knows the mind of his audience, whether they are for or against the ideals he believes in, whether they agree among themselves as to what issues are still important.

We can no longer hold that all change is progress. We begin to realize that this globe, large as it is, has its limits and that material expansion cannot continue forever. Except among the warlike, the begetting of children seems now an enterprise which should be engaged in with moderation. The love of children has not diminished, but the poets will no longer state, as a general truth, that human happiness is served by having your quiver full of them. Those peoples whom we used to call backward are less and less disposed to remain in the tutelage of the nations which call themselves advanced. Life neither stays as it was nor evolves in any predictable direction. Perhaps the world can be made over in a pattern of our choice, but we must first decide what we want.

Many of us are in the habit of saying that it is the office of the poet to point the way but that tribute to his possible influence somewhat blinks the fact that the poet can lead only so far as he is a spokesman. Unless his readers find in his work what they felt but couldn't put into words, he will have no audience at all. We might remember also, as a special reason why the poet should think before he speaks, that our present assortment of pessimisms can be traced to the unsoundness of the hopes that some 19th-century poets encouraged. If you believe that life will ever be the untroubled paradise which Shelley dreamed of you are doomed to disillusion. Even if man were civilized and virtuous his experience in this world would still resemble a sojourn in a strange land. Old age and death wait for us all and for some of us death will not wait. Hard work will remain hard. The most gifted will feel most keenly the tragic difference between what we seek and what we are

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likely to find. The young revolt against the gloom of the ancient churches, against their habit of reminding the worshipers that man has but a short time to live and is full of misery. Youth would rather hear something cheerful. Unfortunately, whatever else might be challenged in the old liturgies, their description of human life is still accurate. The proper office of poet or prophet is to bring courage and wisdom for a good life even in a difficult world; but if earlier poets, less realistic, have persuaded us that the world in our time will not be difficult we are not likely to heed the message of courage and wisdom.

The truth about life, and about the poet's career, is in the comment of Hans Sachs—that many a man can sing when he is young, with love and springtime in his heart, but to sing in age, after the wounds of experience, is the mark of a master.

The times in which we live challenge this sort of poet and none other. We should have little confidence in the resources of the human spirit if we did not believe the challenge would soon or late be answered. It is only in a figure of speech that we say an age waits for its spokesman. Life does not wait. The emotions which will find expression in the next revival of poetry are already astir. When men and women with the creative gift are fully possessed by those emotions the new poets will begin to speak.

When the revival of poetry does come the signs of it will be new generosities of courage and faith, a more comprehensive philosophy and a more honest acceptance of life than we have been accustomed to expect from contemporary poets. And there is sound reason for thinking that the individual singer, in the scope of his art, will possess at least two points of resemblance to earlier heralds of a new day.

In the first place he will express all of himself. We shall not need a collection of his works to measure his size; each poem will give his full stature. It is often pointed out that Virgil's *Eclogues*, written when he was young, record his complete growth up to that time, omitting none of his interests or

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ideas. The *Georgics*, a later work, show the larger man he had become. The *Aeneid*, his masterpiece, expresses him completely at his greatest. But this observation could be made with equal justice of any poet who is a match for his hour, therefore of the first rank. Those who begin their art on a partial scale, crowding themselves into a narrow and rigid frame, are handicapped from the start. Their message may be large, they may stretch the frame a little and its inadequacy may be sympathetically explained, but they will always be, in certain respects, minor poets.

Emerson and Whitman, so much alike, so far apart, are our examples in the past. Emerson answered the challenge of his hour if ever man did, and in his lectures, orally delivered, he gave his complete self and brought to every class of hearers a liberating vision. When he printed the lectures as essays, however, he reverted measurably to the inadequate literary molds in which his genius had first been cast. He deleted parts of himself. His enchanting voice, his haunting smile, could not be set down on the page; but he left out also the specific illustrations of his philosophy, the homely anecdotes, often dramatic, always witty, which made the lectures in their original form a complete self-portrait.

In his poems the thought and the feelings are bold, the form is timid. The great issues of the mid-century, freedom and slavery, social justice, the moral crises precipitated by outward prosperity, the growing influence of natural philosophies, could not be crammed into a few stanzas written in hymn meter. For that reason Emerson was all the readier to greet Whitman's book with an enthusiasm not even Whitman expected, and all the more disposed to hesitate about it on later reflection.

Whitman's literary beginnings were unpromising. His early prose imitated Poe and Hawthorne and when it didn't imitate it was very bad. His early verse was feeble in substance, puerile in form. The development of his genius came like a miracle when he found his subject in the future of democracy and deliberately chose a frame large enough to contain his message,

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flexible enough to expand as his message grew. What if he had tried to say it in sonnets!

If the new poets express all of themselves they will be under the equal obligation to address *all* of their audience. Even in our own country the poet-leader must be more than local, and if he tells us anything worth listening to he should be heard by other countries as well. Since the wide appeal can be made only by concentration on essential truths the difficulty, of course, is to see clearly what is essential and what can be omitted. No doubt the local poet has his place and may look for his reward among those whose affections are as local as his own, but here we are discussing larger matters.

The poets to come may reach us through a new medium, if they care to use it. They will of course publish their work in books but if they have something to say to us all they will consider the possibilities of the radio. These possibilities are as yet not only unexplored but unrecognized.

We shall continue to tune off when the author begins the unnatural intoning of minute and egotistic sonnets. The attention which broadcasting compels is too concentrated for artificial phrasing and false emphasis. But the new poets, if they are to win any hearing, must rediscover our living speech and cease composing, Chinese-fashion, in a literary language. They must write more for the ear than for the eye.

And the very limitations of the radio will prove an aid when they give up talking to themselves and begin to address us all. Before books were the fashion, poets recited to an audience who were present in the flesh, and it was easy to remember that those men and women before you were more interested in their common experiences than in your private symptoms. That large impersonal scope remained the poet's ideal for a few centuries after the convenience of printing became general.

If we seize the opportunity which radio offers, a living audience more numerous than the troubadours ever dreamt of, poetry can once again come out of the boudoir and the study and match itself against the world.

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Understanding Poetry

BABETTE DEUTSCH

WITHIN the past quarter of a century we have seen several radical changes in poetic trends. Those who worked Masefield's vein, many of them Americans who had the tradition of Whitman behind them, spoke of common things in the common tongue. Their successors, also concerned to liberate verse from rhetoric, in the sense of artifice and ostentatious writing, nevertheless insisted on technical perfection. They were extremely erudite and inclined to be esoteric. They declared that the business of the poet is not to state but to suggest, to find a more delicate music for expressing obscure private feelings. But at the same time they tried to preserve a balance between verse as song and verse as speech.

The violent physical and psychological dislocations of the first World War; the telescoping of space and time by the radio and the movie; Bergson's philosophy of flux and Freud's dethronement of reason as the guide to behavior—all these profoundly influenced poetry. It mirrored these dislocations and telescopings; it imitated the jerky jazzed rhythms of urban life; it brooded over and probed the subconscious mind as never before. Some of the younger men found the key to reality in the dream. They juxtaposed more crazily than ever the sublime and the ridiculous, fantasy and fact. In waking life, emotions organize themselves about objects; in dreams, objects organize themselves about emotions. The surrealists, and even those who did not go so far in their submission to subconscious drives, wrote verse that had this dream character. Such poetry found a virtue in ambiguity. It exalted the pun. It asked of language as much as, sometimes more than, the traffic would bear. It followed the logic of the imagination.

The deliberate cultivation of ambiguity may now be on its

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way out. I have read no discussion of *Finnegan's Wake* which, after praising it extravagantly, failed to conclude with the statement, which seems to me true, that Joyce had reached a dead end. Post-War and, unhappily, even pre-War verse is out of date. But those very men who rebel against their elders have not utterly rejected their heritage. This is true even of those who, in that inelegant but eloquent phrase, hate Eliot's guts and of those who say he has no guts to hate. They too seek to preserve a balance between verse as speech and verse as song. They too speak and sing of our urban and industrial environment, its paradoxes, its conflicts and its malaise. And though they object to the literary allusions with which the verse of the older generation is sicklied o'er, they too are allusive, suggestive, outrageous and obscure. I should like to quote, in this connection, some memorable criticism of poetry that has been regarded as both difficult and vulgar.

The first is a passage from a letter written by an English bishop to a friend who had asked him to read a certain poet. "I have found time," the bishop says, "to read some of So-and-So I was least acquainted with. I protest to you in a hundred places I cannot construe him: I do not understand him. The hardest part of Chaucer is more intelligible to me. . . . There are allusions in him to a hundred things of which I know nothing and can guess nothing. And yet without some competent knowledge of these matters there is no understanding him." The writer is Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, and the poet he condemns is William Shakespeare.

Let us come nearer to our own day and hear what a prominent critic has to say about the work of an established poet. "Its form," says the critic, "is easy, vulgar and disgusting." He adds, "No one could have fancied that he read it with pleasure had he not known its author." The poem is Milton's *Lycidas* and the critic Dr. Johnson.

I am not suggesting that most of the younger versifiers are peers of Shakespeare or Milton. Nor will most alert readers err, even in the company of the Bishop of Rochester and Dr.

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Johnson, in dismissing them as obscure and vulgar, though I might add that both obscurity and vulgarity are sometimes defensible. But they will find them difficult.

These young poets' defense of their own obscurity runs thus. Before education became popular the poet addressed the society of his equals. Now that all can read—and read, almost literally, as they run—he has an enormous audience with which he cannot communicate. He cannot do so because the poet is more sensitive and more learned than the average reader. And in despair of being understood by the crowd that finds its literature in the *Daily Mirror* or even in the *Reader's Digest* (which, significantly enough, does not print poetry) he speaks chiefly to his intimates, and he speaks, often, in the "little language" of lovers.

The difficulties of contemporary verse are not, however, insurmountable. Gerard Manley Hopkins, the great craftsman who is claimed as an ancestor by the moderns and who is extremely hard to get at first reading, said that a poem should have one of two kinds of clearness—"either the meaning to be felt without effort as fast as one reads or else, if dark at first reading, when once made out, to EXPLODE." The new poets are explosive, they are not unintelligible. As one of them put it to his audience:

> This poem will be you if you will. So let it.
> I do not want you to stand still to get it.
> You will have it if you go high-speed; it slides in
> Between velocities; you will not need to begin
> But to have begun and to be going; to have started . . .

One might draw an analogy between the reader of modern verse and the child learning to read. The child, as educators know, can understand words he cannot use and can read words he cannot spell. So the cultivated reader feels meanings in a poem that he cannot reformulate in his own words. Of course we cannot ever reformulate a poem successfully. Coleridge's test of a poem still holds: it must be untranslatable into words of the same language without injury to the meaning.

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For a poem is much more than its prose-sense. Music and imagery, working together, convey an emotion, an idea, a vision, or, in Valéry's phrase, a "modality of being that is wholly harmonious," that illuminates experience and that may reorganize the reader's attitudes. Indeed the hostility to much new verse is partly owing to a resentment against having accustomed attitudes disturbed. The anomaly is that the contemporary poet, who often speaks in so private a fashion, is eager to present a new point of view, a new faith.

The old faith was one of the casualties of the last war. Freud meant to the poets of the first quarter of this century what Darwin meant to Tennyson and Arnold. The first World War and the Russian Revolution and their consequences shook the poets of my generation as the French Revolution shook the English romantics. The boom and the depression, the economic disorganization, the fact that machines give man a longer arm and a swifter foot which he uses to destroy himself not only physically but to destroy values of which economists take no account—all this led to the despair expressed in Eliot's *Waste Land*. The young react healthily against despair. They aggressively demand not only a new deal but new rules for the game.

The idea most frequently found in contemporary verse is that society is sick and only a radical cure will save it. Some time ago a sonneteer wrote:

> The Muse of Darwin, next the Muse of Freud.

He might have said:

> The Muse of Freud, and then the Muse of Marx.

The march of the Muses is not so orderly, but all three thinkers provide a frame of reference for modern poetry.

The young poets, like their ancestor Hopkins, agree that for a new science we need new words, that only innovations in prosody and diction can make poetry a fit vehicle for innovations in attitude. They feel the need of a new language, more compact, more allusive. Like Hopkins, and Emily Dickinson before him, they have so much to say, they are so eager to get

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the thing said, that they are ready to abandon grammatical usage, to omit small words like relative pronouns that take up unnecessary room. The old ballad singers, interested in getting on with the story, did the same thing. In fine, whether they follow the imaginative logic of dreams, seeking reality there, or whether they are preaching Blake's sermon

> Thou art a man, God is no more,
> Thine own humanity learn to adore,

the best of the moderns, like the great poets of all times, use and, if you please, abuse language in order to get closer to life. And life includes, of course, nature as well as man (who is a part of nature) and dying (the inevitable corollary of being born) and mind (whether regarded as a manifestation of matter or the other way about). A young poet who teaches English in one of our colleges wrote recently in a private letter, "The problem, of course, is how to be as simple as one can and as complex as the experience demands, and I confess that the latter has always seemed to me the more exciting and urgent of the two." The complexity may require an allusiveness that is rather literary than otherwise. The simplicity demands that the poet plead with Chaucer for his poem: "That thou be understonde, I God beseche!"

He works upon emotions as old as man to present a vision of reality that can be grasped only by the most alert, sensitive, forward-looking minds. Using means more abstract than those employed by the painter, using concepts too precise for the musician, he is occupied, like every artist, with giving an account of experience and thereby ordering the chaos in which he finds himself. What distinguishes man from the brute is his imagination. Metaphorical language, symbolic as the dream but not so private, never divorced from common speech, written to be "understonde"—all that is summed up in poetry—is expression at its most significant, is of the essence of the imaginative life. That is why some of us, in the face of a brutish world, continue to write poetry, and many of you, it is to be hoped, continue to read it.

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The Near East Today and Tomorrow

ALBERT VITON

ILLUSIONS are dangerous, especially during the critical period of world history we are entering. The democracies have already paid an exceedingly heavy price for their illusions. They have carried along much too great a load of traditions and unrealistic wishful thinking which have prevented them from seeing reality as it is. Their experiences with the "democratic outposts" in northern and southeastern Europe, which collapsed like houses of cards before the fascist whirlwind, should have taught them to pay closer attention to reality. From the point of view of *machtpolitik* the fascist powers have been far more reasonable. Yet the democracies have not learned their lesson. It is possible that before this article is in print the Near Eastern outposts too will have crumpled; I fear more disappointments are in store in other parts of the world.

During the past 20 years the British have constantly tried to use the Arabs for stabilizing a Mediterranean balance of power. The redoubtable Arab warriors were to counterbalance the Turks or the Italians should they attempt to gain a preponderant position in the Inland Sea. Hence the pro-Arab orientation of British policy. Successive cabinets, influenced by the Lawrentian and earlier myths, gave up endless opportunities for building a British defensive structure in the Near East on other foundations. How well have the British built? What will happen to the Near Eastern structure? What sort of power are the Arabs?

The bitter struggle for control of the Mediterranean, which is unlikely to terminate quickly, makes it more imperative than ever to take a realistic view of the forces involved. The struggle promises to prove as important and I fear as protracted as those which culminated at Salamis and at Carthage; for all the combatants realize the crucial strategic significance of the

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Inland Sea—which, on account of the emergence of Asia as an active participant in world history and the inevitable awakening of Africa, is now greater than at any time since the discovery of America. Yet there is less solid knowledge and realistic thinking about the strategic eastern shores of the Mediterranean than about any other part of the world. There has been a vast amount of romanticism about the Near East; the power and importance of the Arabs have been unreasonably exaggerated.

No wonder. From the end of the last century, when the crafty Abdul Hamid perceived the usefulness of Pan-Islam as a weapon against the European powers, the Arabs have been the subject of endless speculation; and one had only to mention Pan-Islam to throw normally cool-headed and rather phlegmatic European diplomats into fits of terror. The word conjured half-forgotten memories of the phenomenal Arab conquests during the century following the death of Mohammed in 632, when the Arab warriors burst forth from their deserts and with lightning rapidity became masters of the vast area from Spain and the Atlantic seaboard of Africa on the one side to the highlands of India on the other. There was also the memory of the fruitless efforts of united Christendom to gain a foothold in the Near East during two centuries of crusading, of later attempts to subjugate the Near East and of Napoleon's disastrous campaigns in Egypt and Palestine.

The exploits of T. E. Lawrence and his Arab irregulars against the Turks and Germans during the World War could not but enhance the reputation of the Arabs—especially since the world has been left to learn the story of those exploits only through the supreme artistic skill of Lawrence. Finally, the extraordinary success of the Arab nationalist revolt against the French in Syria during 1925-27, the Iraqi revolt against Britain immediately after the Four Years War and the revolt in Palestine in 1936-39 sent Arab stock sky-high among Western diplomats. "History proves conclusively that the Arabs are masters of this part of the world and that Western powers cannot hope to establish themselves here" a disillusioned British

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colonial administrator said to me in 1938. The belief in the importance of the Arabs was so firmly implanted in the European mind that when Italy and Germany began their campaign to undermine the foundations of the British and French empires it was to the Near East they first turned and launched expensive propaganda to create trouble among the Arabs.

Certain obvious facts could easily be marshalled to justify the view that the Arabs occupy a crucial position in the struggle for the Mediterranean. First, no doubt history has planted the sons of Ismail over the most strategic area in the world. Inhabiting the whole southern coastline of the Mediterranean from Tangier to Antioch they surround all strategic routes between Europe and the Far East. The overland route to the Persian Gulf from Beirut or Damascus has been completely under Arab domination; the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and its bottleneck outlet at Bab-el-Mandeb have been as Arab as Mecca. The Arabs live on the shores and in the hinterlands of those waters; they surround both sides of the Suez Canal. What could not an energetic and progressive people do with such strategic blessings!

Second, nature has endowed the Near East with tremendous resources. The land is of exceptional fertility and food grows in abundance. The Valley of the Nile produces the world's finest cotton; the Dead Sea is an almost inexhaustible reservoir of chemical wealth; above all, there is oil. The entire Near East floats on a sea of this precious fluid, which Europe needs more than gold. The area does not seem to be rich in iron, copper or other metals; but since no geologic surveys have been made no conclusions can be reached on this point.

The importance of the Arabs diminishes somewhat if their numerical strength is considered; yet even from this point of view they are far from a negligible quantity. Probably the territories west of Egypt should be excluded from the Arab complex; even then the population would be well in excess of thirty millions and may be as high as thirty-five. Spain, be it remembered, has only twenty-three million inhabitants; while Portugal, mistress of a great empire, counts less than seven millions.

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More than half of the total, about seventeen millions, live in Egypt; the Arabian peninsula has about seven million inhabitants, Syria and Iraq about three million people each, Palestine somewhat more than a million and Trans-Jordan less than half a million. In addition there are about half a million people in Kuweit, Bahrein, Aden and other islands of the Persian Gulf.

Memories of a common past give a great measure of unity to these people spread over more than a million square miles—as well as a burning ambition to recapture the place once occupied on the stage of world history. With the exception of a few scattered and insignificant communities such as the Kurds and Assyrians the language of all is Arabic. Undoubtedly this constitutes the strongest bond of unity. With the language goes a distinct culture, a definite outlook on life, common manners and characteristics. Islam is, of course, another important unifying force; although the number of non-Moslems is much larger than the number of non-Arabic-speaking groups, the three million Christians and Jews exercise practically no influence on the character of this area. Islam is the faith giving color to this part of the world; Islamic laws and practices govern the daily lives; the Koran has had a profound, lasting influence on the language and mentality of all, including non-Moslems.

All these factors would seem to justify the common assumption of the great importance of the Arabs in the momentous struggle. Yet a conclusion farther removed from reality can hardly be imagined. The truth is that, if the Arabs are not exactly passive spectators, their ability to participate in the drama being enacted around them is extremely limited. They can support one side or the other and at critical moments, if the scales are evenly balanced, their support might have some value. But to imagine as the British have done that the Arabs can be of serious aid shows muddled thinking which I am very much afraid may prove exceedingly costly.

First of all, the appearance of unity the Near East presents to the uninitiated is very superficial. Although tied together by bonds of religion, culture and language, Arab society is more

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atomized than any other national group. Neither Pan-Islamism nor Pan-Arabism have up to this time been positive social forces. They have operated, whenever they have operated at all, as negative forces directed against something. Protraction of the disturbances in Palestine brought forth, after months of incessant and violent propaganda, demonstrations of sympathy in Baghdad, Damascus and, considerably later, in Egyptian cities also. Yet never for a moment were the various leaders able to unite on a definite program of Pan-Arabian action; never for a moment did there emerge a practical scheme for unifying the Near East into a great state. Arabs outside of Palestine expressed sympathy for their brethren; newspapers published flaming articles; demonstrations were held; and that was about all. Very little concrete support could be mustered. The amount of money collected in Arab countries was totally insignificant nor did youth storm to fight for the holy cause. The few non-Palestinians who came to fight were well paid. Not one of the promised medical, military or other missions from Egypt, Syria and Iraq actually arrived at the scene of hostilities.

Yet the disturbances in Palestine evoked far more Pan-Arab support than any other post-War development. Disturbances in Egypt and Syria in 1935-36 produced hardly a ripple in the ocean of Oriental complacency. Damascus and other Syrian cities lived under a general strike for almost two months; there was an immense amount of suffering; hundreds were imprisoned and many lost their lives. Newspapers all over the Near East published excited articles calling upon all Arabs "to rise like one man in support of the holy flag of the Prophet (the blessing and salvation of Allah upon him!) and the sacred mosques"; a few mullahs here and there delivered diatribes against the detested Franciyas; youthful enthusiasts exhorted each other during games of backgammon. Actually, however, there was only one sympathetic strike in Palestine—and this was half-hearted, forced upon a phlegmatic population by a few schoolboys; practically no money was sent to help the bankrupt Syrians; French goods were nowhere boycotted.

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Let there be no mistaking: the ideal of Arab unity is not dead. On the contrary, it is very much alive. I have yet to meet one young intellectual opposed to it on principle—or for that matter one who will admit that, unless it is actively supported by Great Britain, it cannot be realized for many scores of years at least. Theoretically everyone is a Pan-Arabist, and every young man who has gone through high school and therefore qualifies as an intellectual will talk eloquently about the glory of the imminent Arab empire. The common people, moreover, have not yet developed local prejudices. A fellah from Syria will not look upon a Palestinian Arab as a foreigner nor will a Syrian intellectual, unless he manages to get a coveted government job, be regarded as an outsider in Baghdad. All this, however, is a far cry from a real unification movement; and when such a movement raises its head it immediately encounters forces which are far more powerful and have vested interests in separatism.

The key to all Near-Eastern politics is the active rivalry between the various reigning houses. Any attempt to chart future developments that disregards this factor is bound to be far from the mark. Ibn Saud and Emir Abdullah of Trans-Jordan agree on the need to unify Arabs to resist European aggression but each one refers to unification under his own house. They hate each other far more than either hates King Victor Emmanuel. Abdullah regards the Wahabi ruler as a parvenu usurper who drove his father out of the Holy Cities; consequently he cannot forgive the Wahabi his military victories; so long as Hashemite dynasties are entrenched on his borders Ibn Saud does not feel secure in his kingdom, for he is confident they would seize the first opportunity to settle old scores. The Yemen dynasty has its own reasons for hating the Sauds and no love has been lost between the latter and the Egyptian House of Mohammed Ali. Even the two branches of the Hashemite family in Amman and Baghdad are torn by jealousies. And all the houses have reasons for fearing the intentions of King Farouk of Egypt.

Treaties of friendship and peace have been signed between

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the various capitals but these deserve even less attention than similar treaties between Western powers. One thing is certain: the various jealousies can always be relied upon to frustrate any attempt to achieve a united front. No danger will be great enough to bring about even momentary cooperation. No amount of British pressure and persuasion could induce all Arab rulers to sign a piece of paper designed to save the face of the Palestinian leaders in 1936. French hopes of settling the Syrian problem by endowing Damascus with a king were wrecked on the same rocks. Even the menace of fascist imperialism, far more threatening to the very survival of the Arabs than anything encountered in the past, could not be met with a united front. Since some rulers aligned themselves with Britain others decided to tread the path of neutrality, while the Iman of Yemen went the whole hog and sided with the Italians.

Nor is the situation much better when one examines each country separately. Everywhere local politics is a game of rival, semi-feudal houses. Western novices in Palestine, for example, spend weeks, as I have done, to find out the ideological differences between the National Defense Party, the Reform Party, the National Bloc, the Palestine Arab Party, the Istiqlal Party. The simple fact is that there is not the slightest political or economic difference among them; not one knows the meaning of a program of action. The only thing which counts with them is that those parties are headed by rival notables, each supported by an immense family and a group of personal retainers. It is impossible to understand the history of Palestine during the past few years unless one constantly bears in mind these family feuds; and the same thing is true of all other Arab countries.

Yet this, although it is one of the most important, is only one of the forces preventing the emergence of a cohesive Arab front. Islam is not the unified force it appears to the outsider. Sectarian hatred between various Moslem groups is still a factor to be considered. Sunnis and Shi'ites no longer massacre each other but a "good Wahabi" still does the work of the Lord when he dispatches to the nether world a Moslem not guided by the

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light of Abdul Wahab (the glory of Allah on him!). Nor should the extreme and traditional Arab weakness for cold cash be ignored. The Italians and Germans have not overlooked this factor, as the British are finding out to their great chagrin. Almost every statesman and leader in the Near East has his price and the disgusting thing is that the price is so low.

That political and military strength are in direct proportion to industrial and economic development is a truism. Yet no factors are more frequently overlooked, especially in all discussions about the Near East. Western judgment has been warped by glowing reports of heroic guerrilla fighting—a form of petty warfare in which the Arabs excel. Unfortunately guerrilla fighters have never yet won a war against a first-class military power armed with modern weapons. If the Arabs were able to battle Great Britain for more than years that was only because the British never employed modern weapons against them. When France began to use high explosives against the Syrian rebels in 1926 the revolt, which for two years had gone from strength to strength, was crushed with very little difficulty.

The glory of Arab arms is a tradition of bygone days. When war was a personal combat between soldiers the unencumbered Arab cavalrymen on fast, high-strung chargers had a decided advantage over their European adversaries. But those days are gone, nor does personal courage count as much as in former times. No one can question the courage of Arab fighters, especially when their fanaticism is aroused—as it always is when fighting heretics. Bedouins have been known to attack solid lines of heavy artillery with nothing but ancient muskets in their hands, and the fiercer the battle the more reckless their courage. Who, however, is in doubt about the inevitable results?

The Wahabi brethren have won a reputation throughout the world as dexterous, supremely courageous and irresistible fighters. They have won every war against other Arabs. But their luck turned abruptly when, intoxicated with constant success, they started raiding en masse into Iraq and Trans-Jordan. A few Royal Air Force bombers were sent to search them out—and

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not one of the tribesmen who participated in the Trans-Jordan raid came back to tell the story. Since that time the Wahabis have not been at all eager to fight the British Air Force and the frontiers have been quiet.

A sane analysis of the role the Arabs can play in the present struggle must be based upon such prosaic matters as industrial and technological development. An agricultural nation lacking industries is lost before the fight is begun. Nor is it sufficient to have manufacturing establishments of just any kind: Egypt's half million workers, shown in census returns to be engaged in industry, add very little to her military power. It is all very nice to produce cotton goods, buttons, cigarettes, toys, rugs and similar things, but only heavy industry and power plants are of military value. Seen from this point of view the whole Near East remains one of the weakest areas in the world.

Any observer must first of all notice the complete absence of every form of metallurgical industry throughout the Near East. With the exception of small deposits of iron ore recently discovered in Egypt, no deposits of iron, copper, lead, zinc, tungsten or any other of the vital metals have as yet been unearthed. It is of course possible that vast mineral riches are buried in the mountains of Lebanon and Kurdistan or beneath the sands of the deserts. But no such deposits are being worked.

The only vital natural resource at present exploited is petroleum. The rich deposits in southern Iran are owned by a British concern, the Anglo-Iranian Company, in which the British Government owns a controlling interest. Oil from this company gives mobility to the British navy in Indian and Far Eastern waters. In Iraq about six million barrels are extracted annually by an international concern, the Iraq Petroleum Company, in which the British again hold a controlling influence. Despite, however, its plethora of petroleum the Near East, up to the outbreak of the present war, shipped its crude petroleum to Europe and then imported the refined products.

Lack of raw materials need not be an insurmountable bar to the establishment of large-scale heavy industry. Both Japan and

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Italy have no iron deposits worth mentioning, both lack coal and petroleum, yet both have developed very extensive metallurgical industries. Unfortunately the conditions which made for industrial development in Japan and Italy are almost completely absent in the Near East. Where there are no raw materials only the State can establish a heavy industry, and Near Eastern states have been too much under the domination of European powers to permit themselves such a luxury. Much liquid capital is needed and this too the Near East has not had. Finally, and perhaps most important of all, the Near East lacks skilled laborers and native engineers—partly because governments have not had the foresight to establish an educational system capable of training them. Consequently, even under the best of circumstances, many years must elapse before modern industry can become a reality in that part of the world.

The miraculous "industrialization of the East" about which so much has been written by superficial Western observers has consisted almost entirely of petty factories producing common "consumer goods." And these do not require highly skilled labor. Iraq is without any kind of power-driven industry worth mentioning; Syria and Lebanon now have factories which manufacture shoes, small quantities of textile goods, cigarettes, candies, cement, biscuits, stockings etc. Notwithstanding the floods of Zionist propaganda about the "great modern, power-driven industry" the Zionists have established, Palestinian industry is not much more advanced. In all it employs about 100,000 workers. The total annual industrial production is estimated at about $40,000,000—not a sum to get excited about. The greatest number of the "100,000 industrial workers" is engaged in the construction of houses; the second largest group produces various foodstuffs; textile employes rate a poor third; and electrical and chemical workers form an insignificant fourth category.

Power-driven industry has experienced a phenomenal development in Egypt during recent years. Many of the new textile mills, which use native cotton, are equipped with the

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most modern machinery and are comparatively large. There are, in addition, a number of small confectionery factories, soap, cement, glassware and pottery works. One of the newest industries established for the glory of the fatherland is a factory turning out almost 5,000 dozen buttons daily; other small establishments produce matting, baskets, industrial alcohol and wrapping paper. Obviously this is all small-scale industry, contributing little to the military strength of the country.

It is apparent from the foregoing detailed tabulation that, in spite of all the eloquent reports about "Westernization," the Near East is still very primitive. Such factories as have been established thus far or that can possibly be built in the near future are totally valueless from the point of view of military strength. Not one of the Arab states can produce the most elementary military necessities.

Excited journalists who prattle about an Arab *jehad*, or holy war, against Britain or Italy or any other Western power ought to bear these facts in mind. Two conclusions seem to me to follow from any realistic analysis: first, Arab support is not of crucial importance to Great Britain; second, should Britain be defeated the Italians will have comparatively little difficulty in subjugating the Near East. Arab rebellions could embarrass a liberal, pacifistic and demilitarized power like Great Britain, which felt very apologetic when bitter necessity compelled her to draw her rusty sword. Italy, however, which has no scruples against using poison gases and high explosives, could squelch the greatest conceivable Arab rebellion in a very few weeks.

Nor have the Arab states had the financial and technical resources for accumulating large supplies of imported munitions of war. Iraq, which possesses the best military machine in the Near East, has only 50 airplanes, most of them of a pre-1935 vintage; there are fewer than 100 medium-sized field guns in the whole country; and the supply of ammunition would not outlast a few days of heavy fighting. The mechanized force consists of one armored-car section, one light-tank company and two mechanical-transport companies. The Egyptian army is

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somewhat better equipped but it is generally agreed that the Egyptians do not make nearly as good soldiers as the hardier and more adventurous Iraqis. By the end of 1939 Egypt had six regiments of light artillery; the air force counted a total of 67 planes; there were fewer than 25,000 officers and men in the entire military force. Trans-Jordan and Saudi Arabia have no mechanized units of any kind.

I do not at all imply that the Arabs can be neglected with impunity. Impotent though they are they can make their existence felt. The British task of defending the Near East would be somewhat more difficult if they had to worry about a sullen native population sabotaging communications, sniping at troops and refusing to sell fresh foods. Yet even the nuisance value of the Arabs was far greater in peacetime than at present, when the British too would have no scruples about adopting stern military measures to cope with saboteurs. Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Low Countries and France herself prove conclusively that it is possible to cow a whole people and maintain peace—even if it is the peace of the cemetery. And the Arabs know it. The rebellion in Palestine came to an abrupt end as soon as war broke out.

Nor will the Arabs be able to play an important role after the war ends. Their economic, social and cultural contributions will remain completely negligible, quantitatively and qualitatively, for many decades to come. If Britain wins the war they will undoubtedly be allowed to retain their political independence and will gradually become part of the Western stream; if the Axis wins, a very sad fate awaits them. No doubt Italy will not lose much time before sending her hard-working colonists to settle in the Near Eastern lands, potentially so immensely fertile. But culturally, even under the best of circumstances, the Arabs are bound to remain completely sterile for a very long time. They have everything to learn; little or nothing to offer. Modern Arabic literature has been almost completely worthless; the music is primitive; the drama is medieval. Before the Near East can start producing anything of value it will have to experience a fundamental moral and intellectual reformation.

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Scholar's Dilemma

RICHARD M. GUMMERE

AMERICAN life is pulsating with a self-consciousness which prompts self-scrutiny. The past is receiving short shrift; many an ancient shrine is exposed as unfashionable idolatry; and surveys based upon long-term programs of procedure are taking place in politics, business and education. In our schools and colleges especially the strain of economic and political pressure, developed through a courageous attempt to reconcile theory and practice, idealism and realism, has had a profound effect upon the training of youth. The results are not yet clearly defined. The major attention of educators has been turned from our national cultural heritage to scientific measurement, pedagogical method and vocational guidance. There is also a concern for re-defining democracy and citizenship, occupational fitness is a prime consideration, and the psychologist is aiming at a trial balance of the intellectual with the emotional criterion.

The American scholar, viewing the scene from a *via media* standpoint and granting the value both of current practice and of the fundamentals which have held good for 25 centuries—in other words doing justice both to Plato and to John Dewey—finds much to commend in the 1940 picture. He sees elementary schools where learning is a pleasure and where the drum-major sameness of the old days is gone. He believes that the first seven or eight grades are exploratory enough to be interesting and thorough enough to be comfortably preparatory for secondary work—in spite of some wasted time which might be concentrated upon anticipation of solider material. The attendance figures indicate that illiteracy is on the wane and there is uni-

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versal testimony that the pre-adolescent child no longer "creeps like snail to school." Teachers are well-trained and sympathetic; parents are in closer touch with the classroom.

At the other end of the line it is impossible to view the trends of our graduate, professional and research institutions with anything short of approval. Omitting from consideration the problems of teaching versus original investigation with which every university is cursed, and allowing for the current impingement of the economic situation upon academic finances, one is impressed by the blend of real and ideal and the will to avoid the duel between facts and ideas, by the will to put the classroom at the service of the community and the nation. In these advanced circles, as in the elementary stages, the heavy hand of uniformity and authoritarianism has gone. Choices are wide, procedure is free. In government and journalism, farming and forestry, social work or laboratory consultations, there is cooperation with the world of affairs—an answer to Emerson's demand that ideas should be sharpened on the grindstone of facts and to Alfred N. Whitehead's call to our universities urging them to diffuse their results among a public which would otherwise be starved by a diet of immediate and temporary things. The American scholar is therefore no recluse. He alternates between law lectures and court practice; his shop shares new discoveries with manufacturing concerns; he teaches harmony and conducts orchestras; he studies drama and equips actors as well as playwrights for their profession; his fine arts courses qualify museum directors; his psychological activities ramify as widely as those of the practising physician. We sometimes smile at Professor Brains, especially in economic and business interrelationships or in the dust of the political arena; but it is fair to say that he is often the interpreter for the community no less than the teacher of youth. We can no longer accuse him of being a party to what M. Julien Benda has called "The Treason of the Intellectuals."

Thus it is proper to record satisfaction over the trends of two thirds of our American educational procedure. We could

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wish for a little more "body" in the elementary stages. And we find that the cultural and humanistic fields are not as well represented as science and social studies in the blend which we are seeking with adult "life situations." When the scholar has succeeded in elevating the pursuit of literature, languages and philosophy to the position they once occupied in the program of advanced learning we shall have a sound balance and shall establish the practical outlet for each function of the liberal arts. The scholar is on the way to an effective trinity of machine, mind and spirit. With the encouragement which he deserves the Greek ideal of which Edith Hamilton writes is realizable—a combination of mind and spirit, of the natural and the spiritual, in which reason and feeling are not antagonistic, and where the truth of poetry and the truth of science are both true. If this duality can be extended into a triple alliance of Man Feeling, Man Thinking and Man Acting the "lag" so many concerned persons have noted with alarm can be overcome.

Secondary education, however, as it has developed in the American high school with its emphasis on a "life-experience curriculum" and as it has thrust its tentacles into the freshman year of our colleges, reveals no such ordered progress, no such cumulative values. Many critics and administrators are wrestling with its perplexities. The scholar views the situation here with apprehension. He concedes that the non-college candidate should be handled in a concrete way and not burdened with much academic matter while in school. But he is frankly concerned for the "long-distance" candidate for higher learning, irrespective of wealth or social position; and he is alarmed at the prospect of fine material fed on merely vocational subjects, handicapped by the lack of training in certain fundamentals necessary both for straight thinking and for cultural values. He questions sharply the justice of a plan which may ultimately involve pulling down the 25 per cent of mentally superior high school graduates into a curricular program calculated to serve the man in the street, to convey concrete apprenticeship and to anticipate the job but nothing more. He would even go so far

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as to regret the lack of intellectual or leisure-time material offered to the non-college student in days when a satisfactory social pattern is more important than ever before. And if democracy means an impartial search for talent he is concerned for the reward that a promising but under-privileged pupil should receive—of proceeding cumulatively to mastery of college and university offerings.

The curriculum-broadening expert has developed to date more than 200 high school courses or combinations of courses in place of the two dozen available 50 years ago. We are pasturing our public upon such current statements as the "survey" —a chronic and nation-wide habit. The report of the Advisory Committee on Education, published in Washington in 1939 and entitled "Education in the Forty-Eight States," is a challenging volume, full of modern vividness:

> The development of a curriculum that more adequately interprets contemporary life. . . . a program that will satisfy the individual and social needs of American life. . . . a change away from foreign language and abstract mathematics and toward the social studies, applied sciences, the fine and practical arts, and vocational education. . . . a preparation for useful self-sustaining membership in society is the new task of the high school.

Since the picture of community life has altered "in home life, the vocations, industry, government, transportation, communication, leisure, recreation, and the influence of religion and the church" it is the feeling of the Committee who published this excellent Report that "pupils should *have the scientific, pragmatic habit of mind*" with "*an accurate mental picture of the world, based upon scientific knowledge and an informal social purpose.*" Textbooks are being rewritten, curricula realistically revised and pupils exposed periodically to batteries of objective tests.

We all know how this process began. Bacon and the scientific method—Comenius and realism—Franklin and the studies appropriate to the business man—Pestalozzi—the progressives—vocational education. Much of it was good. In a surprisingly

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short time we have traveled far, from a belief in a body of traditional ideas to a platform of direct participation in problems which concern the world outside the schoolroom.

This curve, or graph, has reached its height and in the interests of scholarship, true democracy and that much-abused term "culture" should not dominate the picture. The expert has claimed that any young person can be scientifically trained to perform his duties as a citizen; teachers' colleges have emphasized the psychological ability to hold a class by interest and to treat more incidentally the subject to be taught; personnel guidance (an excellent institution) has endeavored to encourage differences in talent. And yet the calculating machine—"Mr. Markometer"—is standardizing the product. And ironically enough, all this drive toward concreteness is being cast into a mold of theory, so that the program of the next 50 years may, if not checked, escort our system back to another type of traditional method which modern science has attempted to avoid. This is the natural and undesirable result of neglecting the proper proportion—half tradition and half modern experimentation. Most paradoxically, the educator is raising his voice in favor of more leisure-time preparation in view of shorter working hours; and yet the type of training is becoming less and less cultural, more and more vocational. Automobile mechanics and domestic science are to be treated as if they were languages or mathematics. And the "observation," "exploratory" or "survey" courses in the freshman year of many colleges are direct paths to superficiality, surface knowledge and inability to think uphill.

What shall the scholar, the Man of Thought, do as he watches the Men of Action, the Men of Feeling, proceed on their triumphant way? With the increased momentum of such modern methods where will be the scholar's essential tools—languages as a means of expression, mathematics for the foundations of science, science itself for the further progress of civilization? He agrees that practical or vocational skills are necessary. But he is somewhat sceptical that these skills alone, based

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upon a gospel of that which is immediate and contemporaneous, and divorced from the best materials of past tradition, will teach adolescents to think straight. He doubts the effect of half-hour classes in Tolerance or "Getting along with People"; he wonders whether public service will profit by immature round-table discussion—in secondary school or even college. He looks at the multitudinous ham-sandwich curricula of many large universities; he wonders if the curriculum-broadeners who now produce their 200 school courses or combinations of courses will result in rounding out an educated human being. And he registers objection to cock-sure declarations that this whole process is a science rather than an art—dependent as it is on measurements, tests, graphs and laboratory experiments. Like the talk that surges over our radio world the mechanical technique is far superior to the ideas in circulation. It is reasonable that the psychiatrist should supplement the bewildered parent, that "silent reading" and library supervision should fill the vacancy left by the discarded habit of fireside reading in the home. The master-mechanic has naturally given way to the trade and technical school, and the articled clerk enters the classroom instead of the countinghouse. Anthropologists, sociologists, men in laboratories, have measured all measurable things. But what of the imponderables? While we agree with James Harvey Robinson that mind should be allowed to catch up with the machine we strongly doubt that the machine-mind will be able to catch up with its own creation. We must have a positive, synthetic program in our schools and colleges, with less destructive analysis and more partnership with the best traditions of the past.

The American scholar would then concede much to the non-college student: he would encourage the widest and most vocational latitude of choices to the young farmer, brass-fitter, artisan—to the immediate occupant of any honest trade. His only warning in this connection would be that the vocational guidance officer should intelligently diagnose those who are fitted to be scholars and intellectual leaders as well as those whose means permit them to try the college experiment, and

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that no deserving candidate should suffer at the age of 17 in meeting an obstacle to learning in the shape of purely industrial or commercial courses instead of the essential material the academic neophyte should possess. He would furthermore agree that the academic student should not be fed merely upon traditional material. For it would be equally unfortunate for the college graduate to wake up at the age of 21 and find no "life experience" at all in his quota of knowledge and skill. We must offer the high school student and the college freshman a program that will not cut him off from the apprentice world and leave him helpless in solving the problems of a mechanistic age, nor yet render him incapable of grasping ideas, turning the abstract material of tradition into workable contemporary matter or thinking through facts to general conclusions.

Every school program, from the seventh grade through the twelfth, should contain a core of wisely selected traditional material and a fringe of practical and occupational exploration. And not till it is more clearly determined than it is at the present day whether the pupil is of college caliber or not should such an early decision be made between the *practical* and the *theoretical* type of training. For this is the very error which has produced totalitarian followers, at the mercy of smart dictators. Let the enthusiast over languages also handle a plane and the mechanically-minded pupil study mathematics—the lack of which will leave him as chore-boy in an automobile repair shop for the rest of his life. No pupil of any promise should be destined to wake up at the age of 17 to find that his background of commercial English, social studies, general science and practical arts has left him with no chance to enter a good college, no opening towards scholarship and no ability to think uphill. The Scotch people have avoided this error more satisfactorily than any other nation: the talented student is hunted out, from John-o'-Groat's land to the Lowland border, and trained for the university in such a way that he becomes a major contributor to the ideas and activities of his fellow-citizens. Teachers' colleges have been a blessing in their development of the psychological side of the

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man or woman who is to handle groups of young people with skill and understanding; but they have been a curse to scholarship by their neglect, or scorn for the mastery of the subject to be taught and their idea that, if Latin or chemistry or mathematics is hard it should be eliminated from the curriculum in favor of something that can be regarded as more appealing or "lifelike" or "community-conscious."

In the second place let us face the fact that good citizens are not made from textbooks and classroom exhortation but from readiness to participate, when the time comes, in civic affairs. Let us return again to the proper definition of the scholar—one who has mastered certain fundamental ideas and ways of thinking and at the same time plays an active part in his community. The vast amount of economic theory expended in classrooms should abate its flow; instead of this, as Dean J. M. Landis has remarked recently, a classically or mathematically or scientifically trained person should set himself to actual community service with the foundational equipment such a preparation offers. And as a corollary to this principle, the journalist, the artist, the writer, should be furnished with a core of ideas and simultaneously with the technique of his profession—so that the portrait painter may see a value in college courses and the newspaper man may cease from advising high school aspirants to avoid college and go at once into the niche of a cub reporter. In all such cases, from municipal jobs to the carving of a statue, the scholarship of ideas may go hand in hand with the skill of the workman. It was by such a method that John Witherspoon, the President of Princeton, could claim 30 statesmen as his old pupils in late 18th-century America and that Benjamin Jowett could recall several Cabinet ministers under Queen Victoria who had discussed Plato and the Empire in his study.

In the third place the college candidate must refuse to scatter his program all over the available curriculum. If our higher institutions set up no entrance requirements beyond a smattering of modern or business English, some desultory combinations of science, mathematics enough to answer questions about paper-

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ing a wall, and a social-studies program of easy round-table discussions about current events—where will the chemist stand during his freshman year? Or the apprentice in foreign service who needs foreign languages? Or the engineer who should already have become familiar with trigonometry? Or the journalist whose cultural equipment will be conspicuous by its absence? The scholar highly approves a continuous testing program, a system of vocational guidance, well-trained teachers, older men in charge of freshmen, a method of handling the adolescent in such a way that interest is uppermost. But he desires a program of studies, beginning in the 10th grade and containing essential or fundamental subjects—so arranged that the scientist is well grounded in mathematics and physics and that the enthusiast for good reading and writing has not missed the background of Latin vital for all language-study. This combination may be different from any or all of those pursued by the candidate's schoolfellows; but it should contain at all events a hobby-fringe of music or fine arts or shop-work or magazine-writing in the ratio of at least 20 per cent. In this way the irreducible minimum of the scholar is flavored with the very modern ingredients which the present-day pedagogical expert is endeavoring to establish as the fundamentals. The tail must not wag the dog; but it has a right at least to an *a posteriori* position in the animal's anatomy.

Finally, the traditional subjects themselves need to be handled more vitally and in fuller correlation with the world of action. Shakespeare, Molière, Ibsen are worthy of study in themselves, and classes dealing with these masters of the stage are popular. But the historical antecedents of such masters should be studied not alone but comparatively; there should be more vertical investigation of Greek tragedy and comedy, medieval miracle plays, Elizabethan theaters, more "47 Work Shops" and dramatic representations by the students themselves, forming a pattern which is not aloof from the Broadway of 1940. The same principle might be applied in biology, in fine arts (which have a highly utilitarian no less than esthetic signifi-

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cance today), in philosophy, in history or economics. No profounder impression has been made of late upon the eardrums of a million citizens than Archibald MacLeish's radio play dealing with the sufferings of a world involved in another war; and the author has declared specifically that much of its power is derived from a thorough reading of Thucydides and the incorporation of certain word-pictures from the Sicilian Expedition planned by the ill-starred Athenians. It would consequently seem as if culture and science were really parts of the same whole, which need a true scholar to unite them.

There is no better time than now to build up a procedure which shall avoid both extremes—of atrophied tradition and of mere mechanistic immediacy—each of which is an unsatisfying state. Each ends in a purely analytic condition of inertia—where either theory goes stale or action burns itself out. And the result is the same negativity—the exclusive translation of books into life or the translation of life into books. These forces are complementary and should be equally honored by the person who desires to be both scholar and man of affairs. Professor R. G. Collingwood, as he reveals in his recently published autobiography, believes that continuous creativity is of itself inadequate and impossible and that a historical idea, kept intact from the past, can be revived at certain periods to suit a living purpose and to aid practically in solving a contemporary problem. One thinks immediately of true democracy as the ideal mean between the two extremes of fascism and communism. And similarly all the elements of the contemplatively active life have divine opportunity at present to fuse the vocational and the theoretical elements of our mental and spiritual material into an active force. The present is nothing without both a past and a future. If the recent statement of a university president is correct, that it is the function of higher education to "hold the balance" between the traditional and the immediate, such a function must at least be anticipated to a reasonable degree by the high school and the early stages of the liberal arts college.

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The Painter Sees the World

JEAN CHARLOT

THE theme of this article is the artist's description of the optical world in its most naked sensorial state, before this description becomes loaded with the emotional or mathematical computations bred in the artist's brain. The assumption that the painter who "merely" copies does an inferior job may arise from a failure to discriminate between the world as we know it and the world as we see it; for it is, in fact, when the artist copies most closely that he is furthest removed from the commonplace. When he copies through the eye alone he not only shuts out all the knowledge arrived at through the other senses and through scientific research or usage; he also denies the common ground between art and science—the preconceived postulates of mathematical or geometric composition. We could go further and say that the act of copying even precludes the many compromises between vision, the properties of pigments, the wrist and arm movements—all that in painting concerns craft and craftsmanship.

Putting nature on canvas is an activity similar to that of the botanist drying flowers between the leaves of his herbarium; to change live things into dead ones, to flatten things that are round, may seem to an observer of dubious usefulness. Yet the botanist, classifying the weeds of the dishevelled garden of nature, superimposes order and thereby adds to nature. Perhaps there is a similar vocation that spurs a painter to paint; his addition to the world's knowledge is bound to be of an esoteric kind, for if it could be expressed in words, the slowness, cumbersomeness and limitations of paint would make it the least desirable of mediums for the communication of this knowledge.

Vermeer sits before his easel. That the model is Fame the trumpet attests. The artist has started to paint the leaves of a

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coronet of laurels. The rest of the canvas is untouched as yet. Insect-like his brush will cover this plain surface stroke by stroke as with a petit point stitch. He has no plan, if we discount the humble personal opinion which explains the choice of a model and a light. If there is logic, if there is beauty, even emotion, in the finished picture, these traits will come from the outside, seized upon by Vermeer's attentively cool eye. A Tiepolo may astonish us with a Fame flying enveloped in a rustling train of varicolored scarves, a picture whose reference to the actual optical world is as slight as the toe-marks of the diver against the springboard. The painter alone is responsible for whatever beauty there may be in the Italian picture. But the Dutchman astonishes us even more with his Fame solidly planted on both feet, the logic of his work emerging from the outside, just as it does when the jigsaw puzzle addict fits together tidbits and completes a picture whose effect he had not had in mind at the outset. Yet the plastic spectacle, gathering on the sensitized mirror that is the painter's eye, testifies in terms of optics to the ordered scheme of the world.

The painter who uses his brain to check on natural vision is greater than the painter who accepts a commonplace version of the world. Poussin beautifies his pictures with much knowledge of other arts, antique canons of beauty, poetical fables, musical tempi; he reenforces this knowledge with the rules of geometry and a philosophic climate that bind firmly together the too fluid elements of vision. One must also admire the terrific impact of a Tintoretto or a Greco, shattering the optical world and reforming it into another world after their own image. But perhaps greater than both types is the painter whose whole struggle lies in the effort to coordinate this inverted image on the inner eye and the man behind it, without reference to other sources of knowledge and without the interposition of personality. This start from rock bottom, this primary struggle featuring man and his senses naked, may be the only discipline out of which the permanent metaphysics of paint can emerge.

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Whereas the outer world is in three dimensions, a conglomeration of bulks that can be impacted, circumvented, felt or built, the world which the painter knows is different; it is an optical world, smashed flat, and upside down on the dark coating of his retina. Or rather, not truly flattened, it curves along the concavity of the inner eye, is received on this spheroidal screen which corresponds in the realm of optics to the factual shape of the universe. Out of the interrelationship of these twin round worlds, the physical macrocosm and the optical microcosm, grow a series of identities, overlapping, displacements and transformations which may yield a clue to the validity of the painter's language.

If one magnifies a newspaper photograph the better to see a detail, this detail vanishes further and is replaced by the meaningless dot-and-blank of a printer's screen. Similarly the man who plumbs natural vision finds that a blur gathers, muddling the neatly labeled things. Neither the line nor the color of the world as seen can stand a curious approach. The optical world is dependent on physical bodies only insofar as they are revealed by light. Light is its most solid possession. The sleeper and the blind are conscious of things unseen but to the painter the unseen are as if they were not.

The eye gathers the meaning of the shape not from its silhouette but from inside. All modelings lead to this backbone of form, the frontier where light meets dark. Centrally located, this backbone of form draws to itself all the subsidiary, component forms, as the spine controls the web of the ribs. The outline proper, drained of power, expresses the illusiveness of matter rather than its boundaries; the form seen turns into the form unseen; the indistinct junction of solid and space affirms the sponginess of matter, as full of air as an expanded lung.

A house, a wall, a tree, are given definite colors by laymen as easily as if they were children's toy blocks; in the painter's world such local colors are modified by aerial perspective, slashed into contrasting hues by light and dark, suffer metamorphoses that transcend the limitations of our vocabulary.

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The seen world (of which color is the articulation) has no use for those generic terms that suffice to the man who is color-conscious only as he protects steel from rust, daubs a barn door or inspects the bill for his wife's new dress.

No body can stand optically isolated, as it is isolated by reason or by anatomy. Each affirms its affinity to its surroundings until the whole is a unity, as is a straw matting or a shingle roof, each unit dovetailing into the next. The optical outline is not free, as in a mechanical rendering, but receives impacts from lines outside itself, is sucked in by tangential movements, is thus anchored securely to things far and near which it need never physically touch. Local color also reacts to its surroundings as edge meets edge. The apple, which the fruiterer knows to be solidly round, yellow and red, in Cézanne's eye magnifies its yellowness against a purple cloth, reddens to deeper hue against the green of a bottle, is dragged out of both shape and tone by the magnet of a wallpaper design. The object is tied further to its surroundings by the shadows cast; they transcend the object that casts them, ooze over neighboring objects like tentacles. The scientist has to explode the things we know into particles heretofore unknown before he reaches their common denominator. But the visual world, retaining the image of things as we know them—a table, a bottle, an apple—commingles them into a oneness to which common-sense experience offers no clue.

Optical objects, unlike factual ones, are not capable of measurement. With calipers and rod the anthropologist can subtract from man enough to equate him with a row of ciphers. But the shifting relationships in space of bulk and limbs make such a job impracticable for the painter. When Dürer attempts numerical formulae he enters the realm of anatomists; if his etched Adam and Eve, instead of cautiously imitating a bas-relief, behaved with the reckless gusto of the leaves of the trees about them or the blades of grass at their toes their postulated measurements would collapse. The painter must reconcile himself to scientific monsters. A model extends his hand forward

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and it becomes as large as his torso, drags a foot back and it shrinks to the size of the big toe of his forward foot. There is more than a joke in Parmigianino's self-portrait, distorted in a concave mirror, for this bizarre and unscientific relation of limb to limb within a single body is of the essence of the optical world.

Such a world reacts in a most unEuclidean manner to objective spatial truth. When Raphael scorns perspectives as "those measures that seem to be and are not" he brings a fresh wonderment to the somewhat jaded view we take of scientific perspective; it is an incredible world where all parallels meet, where horizontals foreshorten into verticals; an architectural scene, drawn in perspective, opens and closes its right angles with the reckless dash of a senorita maneuvering a fan. This rendering from a single point of view is only half of the optical truth, for the fact from which the painter starts is not a single image in the camera obscura but twin images, one on each of his retinas. Twins, but not identical, for if we shift our emphasis from one eye to the other, backgrounds slide sharply in relation to the object; the object, as we look at it through one eye and then the other, will expose, if it is close enough, more of one side and then of the other, as if it were pivoting gently. This primitive triangulation achieves computations in depth which the cubist tried to emulate—through both eyes used simultaneously we can see both sides of a sheet of paper, five facets of a die.

The distances involved in optics are relative, not measurable by yardstick but created anew in each picture. In a Cézanne landscape the pinetree in the foreground is related to the Mont St. Victoire in the background by a pocket of space that may be no wider than (in his "Mardi gras") the space between the harlequin's right and left foot.

The relative importance of things in the objective world is graded according to man, his hobbies and his needs. The optical approach upsets this egocentric order. Snapshots of a great man may focus candidly on the creases of his trousers rather than

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on the pose he strikes. Inasmuch as the painter-copyist, too, functions as a camera he creates a new order based on shape and colors rather than on ethical, social or religious values. Paintings which attempt to preserve the order based upon the laymen's usage can present only a useless world: painted chairs cannot be sat upon or sketched houses entered, etched beggars gather no alms, frescoed kings cannot rule.

When an astronomer computes the orbits of planets, man disappears from the landscape. When a scientist makes researches on the atomic scale, man's body dissolves into cells, becomes unrecognizable. With his vision of the known world upset, man loses his supremacy and even his identity. Without changing the scale of vision but by shifting his point of view from routine knowledge to pure optics the painter also faces a revolution.

Thus, born of this new vision, paintings which are great plastic organizations glorify the inorganic rather than the human body. Giotto lavishes care on buildings and rocks. To strengthen man's body into the equivalent of a plastic tool he must needs cover it with heavy all-hiding cloaks which bring it closer to his beloved mountain forms. Raphael's bonneted pope is dwarfed by the upholstered tassel of his throne. Velásquez juggles in one picture with three spherical shapes: an apple, a dwarf, a prince. The human body can hardly compete with purer geometric forms or his fleshtone with that of flowers and skies. With man dethroned, other bodies assume dictatorship.

However aloof the new-found hierarchy which governs his choice, the painter is no floating spirit but a severely anchored body. The world he discovers from his ambush is conditioned by the elasticity of the eye-lens and the varying length of the visual ray. With each given focus he finds himself at the core of a hollowed sphere with a range of visibility coinciding with its periphery. This spherical grasp of the outer world, which Cézanne refers to in a letter as "concentric vision," brings what we see of the universe out of a state of infinity and apparent

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disorder to a state limited, orderly, and as such within the range of human purposes. The classical concept of the world apparent in Raphael or Poussin is not wholly a mental construction but an echo of the humanistic order reigning within the optical sphere. The painter, having through candid vision upset the established hierarchy of things, finds in this "concentric vision" a new dignity. His becomes a pre-Galilean universe, with man again at its hub.

This assumption of a rigid focus is adopted for clarity's sake. But when we observe a scene our eye changes its focus according to the range of the objects successively sought. This gives a quasi-tactile reality to the selected details while the marginal areas become indistinct. Vermeer in his "New Testament" at the Metropolitan Museum focuses on his background and fills the foreground with an amazing rendition of a tapestry scene in blurred vision. Titian in his neutral backdrops solves the Gordian problem in a dictatorial way by wiping the unfocused planes out of optical existence. To make everything in a picture equally sharp or equally hazy, no matter how far apart from each other in space, is to establish a composite image—which in painting is the equivalent of time. Successive focuses in the act of seeing collapse into simultaneity in the painted result. In terms of physics, the world that ebbs and flows inside the painter's eye justifies styles ranging from the sharpness of Mantegna to the fogs of Monet.

The gentle light, the amiable scenes favored by Vermeer, the humble objects Cézanne paints, are the wilful choice of men heroic enough to be copyists yet wise enough to channel natural vision into problems that are relatively simple and capable of solution—Cézanne's apple, Vermeer's bare walls, approximate laboratory conditions. Thus the man who copies finds that a style has been imposed on his work through the extreme chastity deemed wise in the choice of subjects—a simplicity such that beside it the purest antique groups of Puvis de Chavannes seem ambitious exertions. Others may relish stranger moods in nature, fantasies in optics tinged with a content that

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is demonic, one is tempted to say Germanic. Such a scene confronted Leonardo, according to his own record—an old woman in black whose head, bonneted in white, seemed in the sunlight twice its natural size. Rembrandt seized upon the optical prestige of night devouring bodies; Grünewald recorded the miracle of their vanishing into intense light.

However candid the copyist's approach, his choice of a "motif" will tend to harmonize the physical fact that is his canvas with the optical facts of vision. Into Vermeer's optical world the canvas itself with its four square angles attracted square window panes, chessboard floor patterns, rectangular pictures that hang within the picture; this affinity translated into depth explains the cubed space of Vermeer's rooms, the cubical constructions of Cézanne and Giotto.

Concentric vision produces a taste for spherical forms. Again Vermeer illustrates the point in his astonishing picture at the Metropolitan Museum which bunches together those spheres —the mappamundi, the crystal of a celestial globe, the apple, the breast to which the hand points. For him the common denominator of vision is the globule of light and color dropped from the brush tip—to his painting as vital as the round cells in its blood are to a living organism. In "The Milkmaid" it transforms a loaf of bread into a star-studded universe. It is spherical as the sun and as the eyeball, the two ends of the ray on which it is threaded, pearl-like.

I was watching a duck waddle out of the shade. A gray fowl on gray dust at the outset, it crossed into sunlight and became a dazzling white bird on pink ground while at a right angle from him his sharp shadow, just born, followed his moves, its blue feet close to the golden feet of its mate. Optically all was changed; the bird and the scene were transfigured and a dark bird was added to the play. But my duck, save for a warmer feeling at its webs, had not noticed the change nor the strange companion aping its step. This bird was no painter but, secure in its tactile experience, upheld a layman's faith in things as they are.

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Life as the Guide of Philosophy

ROSCOE POUND

IT MUST give us pause to reflect that the idea of the motto, philosophy the guide of life, is becoming as obsolete in the learning of today as the tongue in which it is expressed. What did philosophy mean in 1776? Then and for two or three generations to come philosophy meant the whole of organized knowledge. Descartes and Newton had written of physics under the title of natural philosophy. Psychology was mental philosophy. Ethics was moral philosophy. Politics was political philosophy. Jurisprudence was philosophy of law. Mill's *Principles of Political Economy*, so the title page tells us, was written with reference to the application of those principles to social philosophy. When Spencer wrote an essay on rhetoric he called it the philosophy of style. Today, in contrast, everything is called a science. Natural philosophy has become a group of physical and a group of biological sciences. Mental philosophy is the science of psychology. Moral philosophy is the science of morals. Political philosophy is the science of government. Philosophy of law is the science of law. The social philosophy Mill wrote of is a group of social sciences.

Let us consider the significance of this change only with respect to the social sciences, as we now call them. When we thought of social philosophy we thought in terms of what ought to be in individual conduct, in government, in international relations, in the adjustment of human relations by the force of society politically organized according to law, and in the economic organization of society and the operations of that organization. Now that we think of social sciences we are taught that science has nothing to do with what-ought-to-be. It is concerned only with what-is. What-is has objective reality. What-ought-to-be is subjective and scientifically irrelevant. It

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is as unscientific to criticize or apply terms of praise or blame to phenomena in the province of the social sciences as to those in the province of the physical sciences.

Underlying the 18th-century use of the term philosophy was the guiding idea of reason. Philosophy as the guide of life meant at bottom life measured by reason. Even the positivism which became the philosophy of 19th-century science believed that reason on the basis of observation could show us truth. It held there were laws governing social phenomena as there were laws governing the phenomena of physical nature. Hence the social philosophies of the last century did not shrink from what must be the ultimate problem of the social sciences, whatever name they bear—namely, a measure of values for human desires and claims and demands, and a criterion of adjusting human relations and guiding human conduct in view thereof. Kant thought of reconciling free exertion of the will of each with like free exertion of the will of all others by a universal rule. Hegel thought of the progressive unfolding or realizing of an idea of freedom. Bentham thought of utility in terms of leaving it to every man to judge of his own happiness, taking off all restraints upon his pursuit of that end beyond those required by the security of others in their individual pursuit of the same end. Spencer thought of a law of equal freedom—the liberty of each limited only by the like liberties of all. Thus each based his social philosophy upon a belief that what-ought-to-be was ascertainable and to be ascertained. Each worked out for us a program of individual conduct, a program of social development, a program of political activity, of international relation and of legal adjustments and restraints.

In contrast the fashionable social philosophies of today are give-it-up philosophies. What-ought-to-be is a pious wish, a superstition, an unscientific subjective picture unrelated to reality. Economic determinism tells us that the ultimate reality in the social sciences is the self-interest of a socially and economically dominant class. Law is a formulation of that self-interest. Morals are a camouflaging of the demands of that

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self-interest. Judicial decisions, administrative determinations, ethical pronouncements are but specific applications of that class self-interest to individual situations. There is no such thing as objective impartial decision or determination or governmental action. Psychological realism teaches that objectivity and impartiality on the part of those who wield the power of politically organized society are psychological impossibilities. In all that men do they are inexorably governed by conscious or subconscious wishes. Their behavior is guided by these wishes. After the event they seek to satisfy a wish to seem rational and consistent in their behavior by conjuring up specious reasons which had nothing to do with the actual motivation of what they did. Skeptical realism regards anything which is done officially as law because it is done officially, denies that there are rights or duties or that there is any ideal element behind judicial decisions or administrative determinations, and pronounces constitutions and laws and legal conceptions and legal principles as delusion or deception. It is not that the judicial or the administrative process may be carried on according to law or without law or against law. Each individual item of the process, independent of every other, is of itself law for itself because it is done by a power which maintains itself superior to all other powers. Phenomenalism finds reality in phenomena themselves. Phenomena in the social sciences are to be thought of as phenomena in the other sciences. They require no justification. They stand upon their own phenomenality. We do not criticize the operations of nature. It is futile to speak of what they ought to be. Science is only concerned with what they are. So it is with the phenomena of government and administration and adjudication.

Behind, aiding and abetting all these modes of thought in the social sciences, is Neo-Kantian relativism. It teaches that all that we can know is an individual mental creation made of our individual perceptions and experience. Hence our ideas of ought-to-be are purely subjective. They are valid only in our individual systems of thought and cannot be proved to anyone

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else. There is an irreconcilable antinomy between law and morals, and between social control by politically organized society and justice. Laws are nothing but threats of exercise of the force of those who wield the power of politically organized society. We postulate an ultimate political power and all derives from it. Constitutional limitations are contradictions in terms. A pure science does not trouble itself about subjective ideals of balance and guaranteed liberties and rights. What we have in our self-delusion called rights are no more than inferences from the threats of exercise of the force of politically organized society by state officials.

Thus instead of making philosophy the guide of life, the fashionable social philosophies of the time preach life, or the ugly features of life to which they attribute reality, as the guide of philosophy.

This is not a new phenomenon in the history of philosophy. A like radical change took place in Greek philosophy in the Hellenistic era. That era had much in common with our own. The Peloponnesian War had exhausted the Greek city-states. All Greece had fallen into the hands of Philip and had been swallowed up in the empire of Alexander. An age of independent city-states with more or less democratic polity was succeeded by one of great military empires ruled autocratically. Greek soldiers and scholars were coming to be scattered over the world as refugees. But there was no such healthy political and spiritual life as in the classical era of the city-state. It is true there was not a little cultural and economic unity in the Hellenistic world which was growing up. Yet great empires at war with each other stood in the way of unity and by their very size made world affairs seem big and hard to grasp where they had been on a small scale and understandable. The mark of the thinking of the time was disillusionment, just as it was the mark of the thinking of the decades following the World War. Epicureanism and skepticism were exactly the philosophies we should expect to grow strong in such a time.

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It is curious that absolute philosophical systems have urged liberty and that skeptical philosophical systems have made for absolutism. The mainstay of liberty in the past has been the theory of natural law and natural rights, an ideal of social control and of interests of human beings which ought to be recognized and maintained by politically organized society. To the Greeks the ideal of a social control maintaining these fundamental interests was the just by nature. In the *Minos*, attributed to Plato, Socrates is reported to have said that law was a discovery of reality in human relations—that is, a finding out of the ideally significant. From the beginning the Greek philosophers sought to objectify social control. The Pythagoreans sought to do this by a mathematical idea of equality, an equivalence of punishment to offense, of reparation to wrong. In this way they sought ethical principles which, backed by the force of politically organized society, were to be legal principles. Socrates sought this objectifying of social control through wisdom, taken to be self-knowledge. Plato derived justice from virtue. Virtuous citizens brought about justice in social control. Hence he based social and legal philosophy upon ethics, and *sophrosyne*, wisdom of action, the leading principle of virtue, was also made the criterion of justice as a social virtue. Aristotle agreed in making the ethical end not one of external utility but an independent absolute good in itself. He held that happiness was a result of virtue. The virtuous man was happy. But he did not aspire to virtue for the sake of happiness. Every man had the problem of transforming his natural character, which was ethically neutral, into a moral character. The state was an institution for directing ethical aims toward the perfection of the individual. It existed by nature and man was by nature a social being who could find his complete realization only in and through the state.

Skepticism in Greek social philosophy developed in two lines represented in the end by the Epicureans in one line and by the new Academy in the other. Heraclitus, the first skeptic, while skeptical in his physics was not so in his ethics and politics. He

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believed in an eternal order and in a harmony between the individual and the universal. The highest wrong was wilful bound-breaking, violation of the established harmony. Democritus, leader of the atomists and a founder of materialism, who flourished about the time of the truce between Athens and Sparta, held that right and law were something made, in contrast with what exists by nature, i.e. the ideal. In his ethics the keyword is cheerfulness. Maintaining that condition is the ideal. This is quite in transition to the era of disillusionment and social and political give-up which was soon to follow. A generation later Antisthenes, the founder of the Cynics, laid down that all precepts of social control are valid only by enactment or convention. What men had taken to be behind them was a result of the existence of the precepts by custom or enactment. This is the position taken by phenomenalists and skeptical realists today with respect to rights. They tell us there are no rights anterior to laws. It isn't that I claim this watch and the law recognizes and delimits and secures the claim. Instead, we are told, the law has taught me to claim things, as I would not do had I not been taught to do so by the law. It was, indeed, a stock doctrine of the Sophists that the just was such only by convention and enactment. The controversy whether law is morals backed by the force of politically organized society, or is no more than pronouncements or threats as to the exercise of that force, based on nothing more than force or the ability to get by with the pronouncement, has gone on ever since.

But down to the time of Epicurus, in the time of the successors of Alexander, this sort of skepticism was not inconsistent with an active interest in a science of politics and participation in public life. Democritus thought of justice as a positive and active virtue. He insisted that redressing of wrongs was right and just and failure to do so unjust and evil. He believed in participation in public life, said that the statesman's art was the highest of all. A well managed city-state, he asserted, is the greatest of all successes. Likewise, he preferred democracy as the form of government for a city-state.

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It is significant to compare this political and social philosophy with that of Epicurus who moved to Athens to set up his school there nearly four generations later. Democritus, Plato and Aristotle are interested in public life and in the philosophy of social control. Indeed, politics play a leading part in the writings of both Plato and Aristotle. Epicurus' attitude is quite otherwise. He is wholly indifferent as to the form of political organization and thinks of justice not as a regime, of public justice not as a phase of social control by politically organized society, but as something variable involved in men's dealings with one another, to be looked at from the standpoint of the individual happy life. Public life, he held, is something the wise man will shun. If the ruler is wise, then the wise man seeking to live a happy life need have no fear of being disturbed by him. If the ruler is a tyrant, then the wise man, like Br'er Rabbit, will "jes' lie low" and so escape the tyrant's notice and live an undisturbed life of happiness.

In another line a rationalist skepticism developed. Already the Cynics had repudiated all connection of ideas with each other and the Cyrenaics had rejected idealist ethics. The school of skeptics had these schools behind them. Their founder, Pyrrho, was perhaps two decades the junior of Epicurus. He held that it was impossible for us to know anything about the nature of things and hence that the right attitude toward all things was one of imperturbability. Neither the senses nor reason could give us certain knowledge. All our statements expressed only individual opinions, not absolute realities. We must suspend judgment about things and make the best of them. Only the skeptic, who had suspended all judgment, was able to look at things with an absolute calmness, unruffled by passion of desire. It was a delusion to suppose one external condition preferable to another. There was no possibility of positive judgments as to good or evil. In the second century B. C., Pyrrho's skepticism was taken up by the school of Plato, just as the Neo-Kantian left has turned to skeptical realism today. Carneades, the founder of the new or third Academy, held that

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it was impossible to distinguish a true from a false impression, and that this proposition held good not only of impressions of the senses but also of ideas based on experience and of intellectual conceptions. "The transition from truth to falsehood," he said, "is so gradual, the interval between the two is occupied by intermediate links so innumerable and gradations so slight that they imperceptibly pass one into the other, and it becomes impossible to draw a boundary line between the two." It followed that the wise man did not pronounce judgments about things nor seek to promote causes or establish or disestablish institutions as to which he was as likely to be wrong as to be right.

Thus Epicurus and Pyrrho and Carneades come to the same result in their social and political philosophy. The wise course is to do nothing about such things. Just as the 19th-century philosophers came to the conclusion that the highest good is free individual self-assertion, but reached it from different starting points, so Epicurus and Pyrrho and Carneades, although they reached it from different starting points, came to the conclusion that the highest good is a condition of undisturbed passivity, a making the best of things as they come; and the give-it-up realist social philosophies of today teach that judgments of good and bad and the attributing of praise or blame are unscientific and that the scientifically minded man will not indulge in such superstitious performances. Official behavior patterns and the facts of exercisings of official power are phenomena and are to be observed as such, but are no more to be praised or blamed than we may criticize the phases of the moon.

Can we doubt that the difference in political conditions between Greece of the fifth century B. C. on the one hand, and Greece of the third and second centuries B. C. on the other hand, explains the radical difference between the social and political philosophy of Plato and Aristotle living in or in the memory of the city-state and that of Epicurus and Pyrrho and Carneades living and writing in the shadow of the empires of the Hellenistic era? In the time when Epicurus and Pyrrho

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and Carneades wrote there was no use in speculating about ideals of government and little or none in taking part in public life. As philosophers do generally, they put their answer to the problem of the attitude of men of their day toward public life in that time as a universal theory. So they taught a universal abstention from public affairs, an attitude of give-it-up as to social control, which is not only a product of an absolute political regime but, when generally entertained, leads an absolute government to exercise of absolute powers arbitrarily and for the sake of exercising them. It is significant that Epicureanism hung on so long under the Roman Empire and outlived the philosophies of action in the era in which the first citizen of a republic became an autocratic personal sovereign. When the rise of Christianity suppressed the philosophical schools, it found the Epicureans the most widespread and tenacious.

For one can tell much the same story of Rome in the time of the great Roman Epicurean, Lucretius, that has been suggested of Greece in the time of Epicurus and Pyrrho and Carneades. The unsettlement and later the loss of political life at Athens gave a strong impetus to the development of philosophy. Where active minds had exerted themselves in public affairs they turned to philosophy. The same phenomenon may be seen at Rome in the last days of the republic. Two types stand out in the era of political breakdown, each very different from the Roman type of the past. One type among the leading men of the time, Catiline and his associates, Clodius, and later Antony, turned to strenuous gratification of their passions. Another type turned, as the Greeks had done, to the contemplative life. In Cicero's letters we find a continually expressed despair of the republic. It was natural that thoughtful men should turn from practical affairs and public interests to the questions and interests of individual life. The skepticism of Carneades, the philosophy of the later Academy, to which Cicero inclined, and the materialism of Epicurus, which Lucretius urged, were both, so far as has to do with politics and social control, give-it-up philosophies. Indeed, in the Rome of the end of the first

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century B.C. what use was there for any philosophy of politics or social control? Philosophy responds to practical problems of life and puts its solutions of them in universal forms. The problem of that day to the cultivated Roman was how to live in those distracted times. Carneades who told him to keep cheerful and avoid taking sides, and Epicurus who told him to be imperturbable and inconspicuous, seemed to offer practical solutions put in philosophical form.

In the settlement of society established by Augustus, Stoicism became the philosophy of Roman Law. The classical period, the period of the great jurisconsults, extends from Augustus to the end of the first quarter of the third century. Under their leadership Roman Law became a law of the world. Their writings are the foundation of the legal systems of half of the world of today and a quarry for jurists in the other half. Epicureanism and skepticism have no such achievements to their credit. But the Stoic moral-legal conception of duty, after ruling in Roman Law for 250 years after Augustus, and in modern law from the 16th to the end of the 19th century, has been giving way along with its correlative, a right. In the present century Duguit has taught us that there are no rights, there are only social functions, and that as to duty, there is no more to it than that the law constrains men to perform the social functions on which society depends. But what are these social functions? The social philosophy of today gives it up. It tells us we cannot prove that any one of them is an indispensable social function or that it is not. Hence we do well to fall in with Carneades' wise man and Epicurus' happy man and let politically organized society take its course. Kelsen, too, the leader of the Neo-Kantian left, gives up rights and duties. To him a law is a threat. It threatens a certain action on the part of those who wield the force of politically organized society if certain things are done or happen or are not done. Lundstedt, the phenomenalist, adds that what we miscall rights are only illegitimate inferences from these threats. The moral element in law is wholly eliminated. The skeptical relativist tells us that the idea

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of our bills of rights is a contradiction in terms. A democracy in the very nature of things must be an absolute democracy. It is futile to attempt to tie it down by pronouncements or covenants as to what it will not do—that it will guarantee some things, will not do others, and will not do still others in certain specified ways. The proposition is that any government will be absolute in the very nature of things, not because of any sort of absolute principle or rule or law but because there are no such things to hold it down. So runs the skeptical relativist political science of today. Palpably it is closely connected with the failure of attempts to set up constitutional democracies in central Europe after the World War, and the general economic and social disintegration of that time and place.

Nor is this mode of thought confined to Continental Europe. In England a few years ago the judges had to call the attention of the government to a violation of the judicial independence guaranteed by the English Bill of Rights of 1689 and no one seemed to care. Fifty years ago this would not have been tolerated. Indeed, in England today there are teachers of politics teaching administrative absolutism—teaching that administrative officials and agencies ought not to be restrained by courts from being judges in their own cases nor be constrained by courts to hear both sides. They teach that these officials are agencies of government set up to do certain things, and it is futile to hamper them in their doing these things by judicial review trying to hold them to legal limits and legal modes of acting. The same doctrine is being taught widely in America today. The basis of such ideas is Neo-Kantian relativism. Knowledge is only knowledge of our own mental creations made from our personal perceptions and experience. We cannot any two of us know precisely alike. We start from certain presuppositions satisfactory to us; but we can't prove these presuppositions to anyone else. We choose our starting points. But anyone else may equally choose his, and each one's has just as much validity and just as much invalidity as another's. The whole subject of justice is at large.

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Again, as between three theories of the binding force of a law, (1) that it is binding because it has behind it a force imposing itself upon all other forces, (2) that it is binding if and because it embodies a principle of justice, and (3) that it is binding because of consent to it through the organs of a politically organized society, we are now told it is impossible to make more than a subjectively determined choice. Hence we may as well fall back on the attitude of Epicurus and of Pyrrho and let those who exercise the force of politically organized society exercise it as they will in any event. The extent to which this type of thought—accept things as they go, shrug your shoulders and be cheerful like Carneades' wise man or be imperturbable and keep away from active participation in things, like Epicurus' man leading the happy life—has grown and spread since the World War is suggestive. Partly it is a reaction from the extravagant idealism of the last generation and a result of the disillusionment that followed the breakdown of noble experiments such as prohibition and the League of Nations and many lesser moral ventures which have failed to achieve their promise. The age of Epicurus and the age of Lucretius, too, had seen noble experiments fail. In Lucretius' day law and order had pretty much broken down at Rome. It has been said of that time that just as at common law a dog is entitled to one bite with impunity, so in the age of Cicero a Roman was entitled to two murders. Very likely the almost complete ignoring of government and law by Lucretius is due to the substantial ignoring of them by Epicurus. But this is remarkable in a Roman, particularly in so typical a Roman as Lucretius, and suggests the feeling of the time. Radbruch, one of the leaders of Neo-Kantian relativism in present-day jurisprudence, tells us that all we can say about the problem of what gives binding validity to law is that it is only because law is capable of making itself obeyed by means of the force of politically organized society that it can guarantee security. In the same spirit, Lucretius tells us that law gives men security against violence and feuds and private war. The law of which

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he speaks is only punitive. Like Radbruch today, Lucretius translated into a fear of sanctions the great system of repairing wrongs and maintaining transactions and good faith in relations which Rome has bequeathed to the world.

What we have seen as to political science may be paralleled as to ethics and the relation of morals to social control. Epicurus considered justice something in itself painful, and only tolerable because it makes for tranquillity of mind by relieving from fear of worse pains. Carneades held that the philosopher could not, consistently with his skeptical principles, allow scientific certainty to any of the various opinions as to the nature and aim of moral actions. He considered that man's happiness did not depend on any theory of ethics and that hedonism was but another unprovable hypothesis. Moreover all other views of morality did not and could not go beyond probability. But, he held, denial of knowledge did not exclude conviction on grounds of probability, nor did it do so in applied ethics. Hence we might take virtue to be an activity directed toward the possession of what accords with the ideal of a man. Yet men differ and one man's ideal could not be proved more than could another's. The most Carneades could say was that such a conviction was indispensable for practical needs and actions. In the same way, arriving at it from a different starting point, Epicurus argued that virtuous conduct and justice were expedients toward happiness.

Compare the Neo-Kantian relativist of today. Judgments of value cannot be proved and verified. Hence they are valid only in the scheme of some determined system in which the criterion of the highest value is not demonstrable. Law is an attempt to realize justice but this purpose cannot be achieved. Nor can justice be reduced to the moral ideal, because the two have different objects. Justice, in the sense of the regime of justice, has to do with the ideal relation between men. It looks to an ideal social order. Morals have to do with the ideal development of the individual man. Morals look to an ideal man. But law has to do also with the idea of security; and

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the three ideas, justice, morals and security, are logically exclusive and cannot be reconciled. Nor can any measure of preferring one to another be demonstrated. So the content of law and that of morals differ wholly, and if they happen to coincide it is only by chance. The relation of law and morals is one of conflicts and irreducible antinomies. All that we have been trying to do to bring them into accord is futile. Nor as between our possible starting points for reasoning is it possible to justify choice of one rather than another. One is personalism or individualism, a doctrine that community values and civilization values are subordinate to individual personality values; that civilization is but a means of personal education, and the state and law are only institutions to guarantee the security and development of the individual. A second is collectivism or superindividualism, a doctrine that personality values and civilization values are subordinate to collective values; that morals and civilization are at the service of the state. A third holds that personality values and collective values are subordinate to civilization values; that morals and the state are at the service of civilization. We are told we can't prove one of these a better starting point than another. But like Carneades, Radbruch (on grounds of probability) has a conviction preferring the third, which he admits he can't prove to anyone else.

So, too, Radbruch says we can't prove any preference for the police state, or for the natural-law theory of an ideal body of precepts securing ideal rights, or for the historical theory of an ideal of justice realizing itself in experience. It is not possible to deduce the whole content of law from any of these and they are not reconcilable. Neither the natural-law theory nor the sociological theory nor the philosophical theory can give us a satisfactory answer as to what right and law really are. So we just give up. Applied to international relations this must be a wonderfully comforting doctrine for dictators, and applied to administration it is a wonderfully heartening doctrine for bureaucrats. No doubt Carneades' doctrine was

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heartening to the rulers of the early empire at Rome, if they needed heartening. Certainly it was a great deterrent to the thoughtful citizen. Epicurus did not put it that way. But he reached the same result. Let the government run itself or the governors run it in their own way. Can you doubt that a sense of helplessness in the time and place to make international relations, or private relations, or law, conform to ideals leads to a feeling that it cannot be done anyway and so must be given up? I have called it a give-it-up philosophy. But perhaps I should say sour-grapes philosophy. We do not feel equal to the job of finding a foundation for the social sciences—therefore the job can't be done. It took Christianity in the end to pull the world out of the anarchy of the earlier Middle Ages. Epicurus and Carneades could never have done it.

Certain analogies of the present to the Hellenistic era are manifest. There has been a diffusion of Western European civilization over the world, as then there had been a diffusion of Greek civilization. New centers of wealth and population had sprung up and were taking the leadership from the historic city-states. In respect of culture and art and libraries and museums as well as in respect of wealth and population the parallel is suggestive. It is suggestive in respect of the dispersion of races and peoples. It is suggestive, moreover, in respect of the relative economic position of the old world and of the new world. There are no less striking analogies between the present and the period of imperial Rome. There had been then as there is now economic unification through improved transportation. There were great Roman roads everywhere. Constantine could ride on first-class roads from Nicomedia to the Cotentin with relays of horses at every stage. Then as now a rural agricultural society had been replaced by an urban industrial society. Then as now cities had grown and were growing at the expense of the country. Then as now metropolitan centers were replacing a multitude of relatively small local municipalities. Moreover the strengthening of executive au-

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thority throughout the world today and the rise of delegated legislation suggest the devolution of political power which made the first citizen of a republic into an absolute monarch. We are allied to the Roman empire rather than to the Roman republic; to the Hellenistic world rather than to the world of the Greek city-states.

A feature in which the thought of today is radically different from that of the last century is to be seen in the interpretation of security. Just as the Marxian interpretation of happiness which is current today is wholly different from that of Bentham in the last century, so our idea of security is rather Epicurean than 19th-century. The framers of our bills of rights identified security with liberty. They thought of security from interference with one's activities. The last century thought of security against aggression by others so that one could freely do his part in the division of labor in a competitive economic order. It thought of security against governmental action beyond the minimum necessary to free men from the fear of aggression and the need of guarding against attack. We were to be as secure in our natural freedom of action as was compatible with like security of freedom of action for others. Today the security men seek is of another sort. The ideal seems to be a vested right in a life job with an assured maximum wage, fixed hours allowing for much leisure at stated times, and a guaranteed pension at 60 dispensing with the need of providing one's own reserve. This is the existence Epicurus pictured—the condition of happy life, the condition of perfect mental equilibrium, neither perturbed nor perturbable. Very likely the change reflects the exigencies of a more crowded world. Possibly it is due in part to the development of luxury, leading to disinclination to the competitive carving out of a place for oneself which the last century took for happiness. At any rate, freedom from worry about what one can achieve and acceptance of political events as they may happen go together as an accepted view of wise living, as they did in the social theory of Epicurus.

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Another respect in which the thought of the present is more akin to Epicureanism than to the philosophies of the last century is in distrust of reason. Freudian psychology has been teaching us that either consciously or subconsciously men do what they wish and then justify what they have done by reasons which are not at all the real determinants of behavior. Consequently reason comes to be regarded as mere specious justifying to oneself and to others of what one desires to do and does accordingly. Thus Freud's ethics are in one way very like the ethics of Epicurus. Freud insists on wise choice growing out of experience. One is not to dissociate or repress. One is to maintain a wise balance or integration, growing wiser by experience. Epicurus, too, has a doctrine of choice and avoidance, based on a calculus of pains and pleasures, with good sense, partly intuition but largely experience, showing the wise and right course; right because it leads to the happy life. The sound mental life which Freud stresses is what Epicurus stresses in his doctrine of imperturbableness and the happy life.

In some eras men do more thinking about themselves than in others. Eras of action are less concerned with the internal and more with the external man; not with what one is but with what he does. Note the difference between the biographies of the last century and those of today. The biographies of the last century were taken up with doing—what the subject did and how he did it. Those of today go into the subject's psychology and set up the hidden motives—if not very creditable, so much the better as the biographer of today looks at it. If he shows that George Washington's motives may be made out to have been not always what one would like to think them, his actions after all were phenomena and it is unscientific to apply our subjective ideas of praise and blame to phenomena.

Finally, Marxian economic realism has much in common with the Epicurean social philosophy. The static ideal of a happy life is to be attained as men get rid of classes. This can be done by abolishing property. Thus there will be no need of law to hold down one class in the interest of another. The

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ideal is a condition such as Epicurus also looked to; one in which every one is undisturbed, without worry and without envy, and freed from strife. Once the Marxian class struggle has been brought to an end Marx looks forward to the same social-ethical result as Epicurus and Carneades.

Reality, significance, for the social sciences seems to me to lie in the maintaining, furthering and transmitting of civilization—the raising of human powers to their highest unfolding through control over nature (both external nature, the harnessing of physical nature to man's use, and internal nature, the control over human nature that makes a social, an economic, a political order possible). Without this control over human nature man never could have attained much control over physical nature. Without the control over physical nature it would not have been possible for the large populations of today to maintain themselves. The two sides work together. But civilization is something that goes on. It is a process, not a condition. So it can't be thought of as a general condition of imperturbableness. On the side of control over human nature there are the three great agencies of social control—religion, morals and law. When realists tell us those are superstitions and that there is nothing but force holding one class down in the interest of another, they ignore the history of civilization which has shown a continually wider sphere of human interests secured by ordered social control and a continually more objective process of adjusting relations and ordering conduct to that end. We can't do better than we try to do. By trying to govern ourselves and our fellow men objectively and impartially we have succeeded in building up a social and legal order on which rests a great economic development. To maintain, further and transmit that inheritance calls for a philosophy which believes life can be guided and seeks to guide it. The civilizations for which the give-it-up philosophies of the past were thought out broke down. They were guided by the life of the time and could of themselves give no real guidance.

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In the Workshop

What Is Chemistry Doing to Meet Man's Needs?

JULIAN F. SMITH

GENERATIONS of economists have studied man's needs in relation to the production and distribution of goods, and for some time now these needs have been studied by chemists as well. Food, drink, clothing and shelter—to each of these basic needs and to many other important if less elementary ones the chemist has given his attention. Let us survey very briefly the contributions made by chemical art toward satisfying man's wants.

Applied chemistry entered the food industry, for example, with the discovery of fire, but was not recognized as such until many centuries later. Something more than a century ago came the realization that chemical properties and reactions accompany food products from sprouting seed or embryonic animal through growth, maturity, preparation and consumption to metabolism in the body. This very year might be celebrated as the centennial of several outstanding advances in food chemistry. Justus von Liebig, for example, did epochal work on vegetable proteins and recognized their fundamental place in nutrition; he drew clear lines of distinction between nitrogenous compounds such as caffeine or other alkaloids and the true proteins, and, ably assisted by Bence Jones, performed some truly remarkable protein research in 1841.

Pieter van Foreest, a courageous Dutch physician of nearly four centuries ago, dared to proclaim scurvy as a curable dietary disease and not a scourge of God. Today synthetic vitamin C cures scurvy and is named ascorbic acid in honor of its antiscorbutic potency. Similarly synthetic vitamin B_1 is named aneurin for its antineuritic properties, and so on. Vitamins A, D, E and K have been synthesized in recent years and vitamin research is still in active progress, both chemically and biologically.

Food chemistry has given man a great deal of information about the proteins, carbohydrates, fats, mineral salts and accessory factors which maintain life but it is still far from satisfying the curiosity of scientists. Why does sugar metabolism in the body sometimes go astray and bring the physicians another diabetic patient? How does

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chlorophyll convert carbon dioxide and water into starch and can man duplicate the performance? How efficiently does a cow convert grass and cereals into milk? These and hosts of other questions provide the material on which present and future research can thrive.

For a substance with a formula as simple as H_2O, water is an unbelievably complicated subject for research. Because it is able to hold almost anything in solution or suspension, chemists, engineers and bacteriologists must guard every inch of its road from earth to city faucet. Potable water has become an enormous industry.

If a city chemist knows the local river is polluted with upstream industrial wastes and sewage, that it is swarming with bacteria including *Bacillus coli* and that typhoid fever and other dread diseases lurk in its turbid eddies he also knows that settling basins, sand filters and water-softening chemicals will eliminate silt and much of the hardness and that chlorine will destroy the bacteria. Much of this chemical process is old and familiar, but the difficult problems of making the operations cheap enough for treating public water supplies have been solved only in recent years.

Chemical research reveals beer as a complex system of proteins, hop bitters, carbohydrates, alcohol, carbon dioxide and water. Wines are aqueous alcohol systems in which aroma, flavor and bouquet depend largely on various aldehydes, ketones, esters and sugars. According to their origins distilled liquors also contain a variety of substances in solution, e.g. caramelized sugar, ethyl and higher alcohols and aldehydes. Yoghurt, kumiss, absinthe, vermuth, pulque, hydromel, sake, yerba mate—chemists have improved quality or economy in all the odd assortment of native flowing bowls.

A modern trend in beverage technology is the production and distribution of fruit-juice beverages. They are palatable and carry indispensable minerals and vitamins. But large-scale production involves problems of sterilization and preservation without loss of flavor and vitamin potency. This is an active field of research, promising much for the future.

Many centuries were spent in learning how to utilize most effectively the fibers offered by nature for the production of finer stuff for handsomer, more serviceable garments. But Count Hilaire de Chardonnet, a French chemist, conceived and carried to fruition the bold idea that man need not rely solely on these for his textile fibers. In 1885 he patented the first artificial fiber and the rayon industry was born. His product was made by treating cellulose with nitric acid. In commercial production it has yielded to three other types of rayon, but cellulose (a complex polysaccharide built up from glucose units in plant metab-

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olism) is still the raw material and is among the most widely distributed and abundant of all natural products.

In the viscose process cellulose is combined with a xanthic acid derivative to form cellulose xanthate. In the cuprammonium process a copper-ammonia-cellulose solution is used. In the acetate process cellulose is treated with acetic acid to form cellulose acetate.

But with all this technical progress man was still dependent on fibrous raw materials for his artificial fibers until the recent introduction of nylon made from chemicals which trace back ultimately to coal, water and air. Since its advent other synthetic fibers have been brought into commercial production, with vinyl resins among the leading sources. Spun glass, a recent development in glass textiles, is also a synthetic fiber.

Chemical research as related to clothing is not by any means deserting natural fibers. Fundamental problems of fiber structure are being actively studied and the results should be enormously beneficial to textiles, both natural and artificial. Cotton, linen, wool and silk have each their own structural peculiarities which must be investigated and modern x-ray instruments are probing into their secrets.

As in other industrial arts long centuries of purely empirical progress preceded systematic application of chemistry to building materials. Portland cement, iron and steel, nonferrous metals, linoleum, mortar and plaster were empirical developments. Glass bricks, mineral wool insulation (melted slag from steel mills, blown with steam into fibers), synthetic resin wall panels and molded furniture are a few of the advances achieved in the past few years by conscious application of science to the building arts. Chemical research is also largely responsible—partly by creating new products such as synthetic resins and cellulose lacquers, partly by improving old familiar products such as linseed oil —for the progress being made in the production of more satisfactory and decorative finishes on wood and rustproofing or corrosion-resisting paints for metals.

Cosmetics could not have reached their present high level of refinement and quality without chemical research in a great variety of problems relating to skin texture and care, follicular functions, stable emulsions, natural and synthetic perfumes, harmless organic and inorganic colors and excipients. Today hair preserves its natural luster and sheen with synthetic soapless shampoos; men, no longer reliant on bear-fat to make their hair behave, are offered tonics and hair dressings by the score. Costume jewelry called in the new synthetic plastics to imitate precious stones, coral, amber and pearls in faithful likeness at small cost. Ornaments come from

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the same molded plastics in a variety of colors and designs.

The automobile industry stands in the forefront of progress today largely because chemical technology has contributed cheap, durable rubber for tires; efficient fuels in vast quantity through chemically-processed petroleum; lubricants, also from petroleum; strong light metal alloys for construction; and improved paving materials for highways.

The last decade has witnessed spectacular progress in rubber technology and in petroleum chemistry. Several new sources of synthetic rubber have been developed and the word "elastomer" has been coined as a generic term for them. Among the leading artificial rubbers are neoprene (a product of the du Pont laboratories), Thiokol (invented by J. C. Patrick), Buna rubber (German synthetic products manufactured under license in America), butyl rubber (Standard Oil Development Company) and Ameripol, a joint product of the Goodrich (rubber) and Phillips (petroleum) laboratories. The last two appeared only in 1940.

Chemistry is also intimately related to public health problems and recent years have brought out an imposing procession of contributions to chemotherapy. Vitamins, hormones, and synthetic drugs are improving general health and relieving distress on many fronts of the eternal war against disease and suffering. With increasing success new drugs have been used to treat pneumonia, gonorrhea, syphilis and a number of other bacterial infections.

Some chemical research is systematically aimed at improving commercial processes and products for profit, but much of it is pure research for its own sake. Curiously enough some of the greatest commercial advances have resulted from pure research—the x-ray, for example, with all its medical and industrial uses, radium therapy, and many applications of electron tubes. And as I write this chemists everywhere are applying themselves to new problems. Chemical research has been and will be a major influence in raising to new high levels every art of ministering to man's needs.

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Discussion

ORGANIZED MEDICINE

To the Editor:

In a recent issue of your periodical you published an article by T. Swann Harding entitled "Farmers and Miners and Group-Health Plans" (Summer 1940) and I asked some of the workers in our bureau to send me their criticism of it:

> Like most of Harding's writings this is extremely biased and full of misinterpretations and sometimes misstatements. Pages 305-306: He mistakes the self-criticism of physicians for an attack upon the whole system of medical care.
>
> Pp. 306-308: The West Virginia situation is completely misrepresented, being based upon a report of the Bureau of Cooperative Medicine. The statement that (p. 307) there was "no reported investigation, no protest" is wholly untrue, as any one can discover by reading the *West Virginia Medical Journal* in recent years. There has been continuous criticism of "list practice," and so far as Workmen's Compensation is concerned (pp. 308-309) the West Virginia State Medical Association succeeded in obtaining a law which forbids the collection of money from employees to pay for medical care under compensation. Whatever changes have been produced in this condition are due far more to the action of organized medicine than to the Bureau.
>
> P. 309: It would be rather hard to quote where in the hearings of the Wagner Health Bill "Officers of the American Medical Association . . . declared that no further provision of medical care was needed."
>
> The statement that the entire Farm Security Administration plan was originated with nothing but protests from organized medicine is simply not so. Practically every feature of that plan as originally proposed and put into operation with consequent failure in North and South Dakota has been revised through the efforts of organized medicine. That it works as well as it does is due almost entirely to its efforts.
>
> His picture of the operation of these plans is by no means truthful. In all cases the physicians contributed about half of their original fees, and in many cases received only a small portion of the promised income.
>
> P. 312: The statement that "the local associations of doctors . . . had never thought of the plan" is ridiculous in view of the fact that a similar plan was inaugurated for the care of the indigent in cooperation with relief authorities by medical societies even before the FERA, and that aside from the feature of regular contributions by the clients about the only places that the FERA was at all successful was where some such plan was operated by the state and county medical societies.
>
> P. 314: The statement that the proposal of the California Medical Association is "the very form of health insurance which the American Medical Association has fought bitterly as rendered possible under the Wagner Bill" is simply untrue. Neither were Doctors Ross and Loos expelled for starting their monthly payment medical plan.
>
> Of course he never discusses the elaborate plans that were put into operation in many cities and counties by state and county medical societies before the Farm Security Administration ever suggested its plan. He has apparently never heard of some 15 states that have developed prepayment plans, most of which are not yet in operation.

Apparently THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR did not trouble to make certain that its writer was familiar with the most recent aspects of the work in the field of medical care or indeed to verify what, if any, standing he has in the field of medical economics.

MORRIS FISHBEIN, M.D., *Editor*
Journal of the American Medical Association
Chicago, Ill.

DR. HUGH CABOT REPLIES

Editor's note: Dr. Hugh Cabot, as The Scholar's special adviser in the field of medicine, was invited to answer the above letter.

To the Editor:

I have read with interest the copy of the letter from Doctor Morris Fishbein criticizing the article by Mr. Harding which appeared in

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your Summer number. It is a typical Fishbeinian effort and quite in his best style. As a special pleader he is in the front rank and has the qualification often thought of as more appropriate to members of the legal than the medical profession, of being able to becloud the issue.

He says that Mr. Harding's article is "full of misinterpretations and sometimes misstatements." An interpretation is necessarily a matter of personal opinion, and Doctor Fishbein thus asks us to accept his opinion as representing the facts. This I fear many will be unwilling to do.

It is by no means always easy to say what the facts are. In his criticism of the reference to the report of the Bureau of Cooperative Medicine on the West Virginia situation, he does not make a good case for the statement that the "situation is completely misrepresented." I have some familiarity running over a period of years with the situation and have studied with care the report of the Bureau. On the whole, I believe that the picture as shown in that report is factually correct and that the conclusions are not only sound, but of first-class importance.

Mr. Harding is not strictly correct in his statement that "no reported investigation and no protest" was made. On the other hand, though there have been reports made to medical societies and there have been protests, very little important improvement has resulted. The really serious conditions under which physicians working for the companies failed to deliver good medical care, could, I think, have been remedied by the forces of organized medicine had they tried.

Organized medicine has not been slow in attempting to prevent the development of such organizations as the Ross-Loos Clinic or the Group Health Association of Washington—to cite only the best known—of which they did not approve. They have utilized their power over their members to handicap—though they have failed to destroy—these organizations. It would, I think, have been wholly within their power using the same authority in West Virginia to remedy this situation many years ago. Whatever efforts organized medicine has made in West Virginia have been—relatively speaking—ineffective and have not resulted in the putting forward of well-considered plans to remedy it. The report of the Bureau of Cooperative Medicine was constructive and offered a remedy which seemed to me worthy of the most careful consideration. Of course, the Bureau has not the power of organized medicine. Thus, in general terms, I think Mr. Harding is wholly justified.

Though Doctor Fishbein is technically correct in his view that the American Medical Association had not at the hearings on the Wagner Health Bill actually "declared that no further provision of medical care was needed," the layman—even though very familiar with their attitude—might easily have been pardoned for assuming that on the whole they are opposed to change, critical of attempted legislation, and fairly well satisfied with existing conditions.

Doctor Fishbein's strictures upon Mr. Harding's attempt to picture the operation of the plans put into action by the Farm Security Administration do not seem to me justified. While I believe it to be true that the physicians in the regions dealt with were having the greatest difficulty in carrying on their practice and were thoroughly cooperative with suggested methods of improvement, the fact remains that the efforts of the Farm Security Administration coupled with liberal assistance from the physicians, did succeed in improving a situation where the efforts of organized medicine had failed to get results. I believe that the purpose of Mr. Harding's statements was to call attention to the fact that the intervention of government had been beneficial in contradistinction to the tendency of the AMA to deprecate it. The net effect of what Mr. Harding said was, I think, in the interests of progress.

Doctor Fishbein's stricture upon Mr. Harding's statement in regard to the case of the California State Medical Society in expelling Doctor Ross and Doctor Loos is a mere play upon words. Mr. Harding did not say that "Doctors Ross and Loos (were) expelled for starting their monthly payment medical plan." What he did say was that they were accused of unethical practice. That is true. It may be worthwhile to note here that among the charges against them was that of solicitation—which was certainly never proved. As a matter of fact, their expulsion was in effect overruled by a decision of the Judicial Council of the AMA on the ground that the proceedings had not been in proper form. The essence of Mr. Harding's statement is correct. The essence of Doctor Fishbein's statement is incorrect.

Finally, it can hardly be held against Mr. Harding that he does not discuss at length the prepayment plans which Doctor Fishbein says have developed in some 15 states, but most of which he admits are not yet in operation. It would puzzle even Mr. Harding to discuss intelligently things in the embryonic stage.

One may fairly doubt whether Doctor Fishbein assists in the improvement of medical care for the American people by this sort of special pleading.

HUGH CABOT, M.D., *Boston, Mass.*

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TO PRESERVE AN IDEAL

To the Editor:

There are two fundamental points upon which every "American scholar" will agree with John Erskine in the latter's editorial appearing in the Autumn 1940 issue. But some of us would like to carry the same line of thought farther.

The first point is that we American citizens are Americans. We are entitled to our personal sympathies; but we are not called upon to fight for any nation except our own. There must be no nonsense about "Lafayette, we are here."

The second point is that we profess and have partly realized an ideal which we believe is worth preserving. And naturally, our first duty is to preserve it at home. We must guard against racial discrimination, religious intolerance, caste feeling, and above all against the suppression of free speech. That "American" ideal we call Democracy—the term is vague; but we are fairly unanimous about a very precise definition: "Liberty under the Law." Beyond that there is anarchy on the one hand, tyranny on the other. We need hardly add that liberty implies equality of status. A state in which liberty and equality are guaranteed through justice is civilized.

Now I submit that among nations as well as among men, civilization means liberty under the law. The refusal to accept the law means anarchy; and the result of anarchy is tyranny. Only the "American" principle will save the world from such a fate.

We may believe that we are strong enough to preserve our liberty under our own law. We are not. As a result of anarchy, we have already forfeited our liberty. The Dictators have compelled us to arm, to conquer our ancient aversion to military service: they are making Prussians of us all. They are forcing us to devote the best of our energies to the building of airplanes and tanks, when we should like to spend them on rehousing, education, scientific research or artistic creation. It will be increasingly so as country after country is nazified; it will be so unless liberty under the law is made to prevail.

We were untrue to the American way when, twenty years ago, we preferred international anarchy to international law. We see the inevitable result of our *sacro egoismo*. The ineluctable condition of liberty, for ourselves as well as for others, means "commitments," yes; but not commitments to England or France; only to our own ideal. It means the use of force, yes; but only in the service of the law and against law-breakers.

ALBERT GUÉRARD, *Stanford University, Cal.*

TWO NEW BOOKS

for the

AMERICAN SCHOLAR

NO PUBLISHING EVENTS for the year 1940 hold more of importance, pleasure, and significance than the appearance of two books, one by the late Frederick J. E. Woodbridge and the other by Florian Znaniecki.

Professor Woodbridge's book is entitled *An Essay on Nature.** It might well be entitled "An Essay on the Nature of Knowledge." He has long been known and respected as one of the country's foremost teaching philosophers, rather than as a writing philosopher. The last years of his life, though, were devoted to a most fruitful study of nature and knowledge, the visible world, time and history, the universe of discourse, the dualism resulting from the pursuit of knowledge and happiness, of the natural and the supernatural.

Professor Znaniecki's book, *The Social Role of the Man of Knowledge,*† has to do with the social position, obligations, responsibilities, privileges, and rewards of the man whose chief function is the pursuit of knowledge.

No American scholar can dodge these books. He must read them and heed them, or else abide by the implications of his inattention.

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About Our Authors

Quotation marks usually indicate passages taken directly from autobiographical letters requested from the authors themselves.

To ALVIN JOHNSON is due much of the stress THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR has persistently laid upon our timeless heritage and on the imperishable elements in our contemporary world. He is Director of the New School for Social Research; author of various volumes in his field of many years, economics; and Director of the Graduate Faculty—an institution which has given so real a foundation for the belief that in making a place for exiles, America finds its intellectual life enriched.

Though GEORGE N. SHUSTER is now engrossed in the problems of Hunter College, of which he has just become president, he says that his "personal interests do not appear to have changed very greatly." He is a logical son of the same state which among other things has produced the LaFollettes—as anyone acquainted either with his numerous books or with *The Commonweal* (of which he was associate editor, 1925-1929, and managing editor, 1929-1937) already knows. . . . "It still seems to me that the problem of aid to victims of tyranny and disaster abroad is the most challenging and the most worth trying to do something about. And I am still as much concerned as ever with the writing and thinking done by my contemporaries because these forces are shaping the America of the future."

IRWIN EDMAN as a member of the Editorial Board has persuaded a number of men of the pleasures of publication in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR and in the current number furnishes the further persuasion of example. He honestly confesses of the present essay, "This is the kind of thing that comes as an act of grace and there is not much grace for this kind of mood in these days." . . . Aside from THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR Mr. Edman gives his time to Columbia as professor of philosophy; to the *Journal of Philosophy* (as book editor for esthetics); to various magazines as contributor; and to his professional colleagues and the general public in his numerous books which, in addition to several of which he was co-author, have included *Poems* and the widely-known *Philosopher's Holiday* and *Candle in the Dark*.

CLIFFORD COOK FURNAS was a research chemist with the U. S. Steel Corporation in 1924-25 and a physical chemist with the U. S. Bureau of Mines for five years thereafter. Since 1931 he has been associate professor of chemical engineering at Yale and has brought out four books (one, *Man, Bread and Destiny*, with his wife as co-author). . . . "My major interest centers around being a dispenser of information. In addition to my university work I am serving as a member of the publications committee of two national professional societies, have recently become technical editor for the revision of *Rogers Manual of Industrial Chemistry* for D. Van Nostrand Company and an associate editor of the *History of American Chemical Industry*, a four-volume cooperative effort that will be 'in the works' for several years."

PEI-SUNG TANG, son of a cabinet minister, received his early education in Japan. During the World War, however, he returned to China and in 1925 graduated from Tsing Hua College. Later he came to this country, studied botany at the University of Minnesota, became a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi, and in 1927 graduated magna cum laude. Two years later he received his Ph.D. in plant physiology from Johns Hopkins for work done mainly under the direction of Dr. Burton E. Livingston (member of the Editorial Board of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR). In 1930-32 he was Parker Fellow in physiology at Harvard and during the following year instructor in physiology. He left Harvard to become professor of biology at National Wuhan University in Wuchang but at the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War joined the faculty of Tsing Hua University and is now director of the physiological laboratory in its Institute of Agricultural Research.

As a student at Harvard last year CHARLES EDWARD EATON worked under Robert Frost and Robert Hillyer and has had verse accepted by various magazines, including *The Yale Review* and *The North American Review*. This year he teaches English at the University of Missouri.

GEORGE H. SABINE has been a roaming if not a peripatetic philosopher and has taught successively at Stanford, the University of Missouri, Ohio State University and Cornell. His interests, too, have roamed, as evidenced by his membership in Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi. But his concern with both philosophy and political science is not limited to these memberships; it has found expression in his own volume, *A History of Political Theory*, and the several books of which he has been joint translator.

JOHN ERSKINE says: "I have always been interested chiefly in human beings. If I hadn't been I shouldn't have gone into teaching or novel-

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writing. My chief passion is for writing—or perhaps for talking. This latter activity I often call an exchange of ideas." . . . But music, as well as teaching and novel-writing, is a mode of communication. Mr. Erskine has referred in passing to what many would consider worthy of extended comment—a period of 34 years as a teacher, six of them at Amherst and the remainder at Columbia (from which he retired in 1937 as professor emeritus of English). From 1927 to the present time he has been Director of the Juilliard School of Music; and during part of that period Director of the Metropolitan Opera Association.

After her graduation from Barnard BABETTE DEUTSCH was associated with *The Political Science Quarterly* and with Thorstein Veblen. She has brought out several novels; a book of criticism, *This Modern Poetry*, used in colleges scattered over the United States; and in collaboration with her husband, Avrahm Yarmolinsky, a number of translations of verse—one of them of German poetry and the rest of Russian. . . . Poetry has steadily been her chief interest. Her most recent volume of verse, *One Part Love*, was published in 1939. Her latest book, *Heroes of the Kalevala*, the Finnish Saga Retold for Boys and Girls, was an excursion into juvenile literature.

A few years ago ALBERT VITON spent three years in the Near East and showed an uncanny ability to know both government officials and Everyman. He is at the moment a member of the political science department at Northwestern University. . . . One never asks him "Are you writing something now?" but "What are you writing?" Last spring his *Great Britain* received substantial praise from various reviewers. He fears, however, that those acquainted with his early articles in *Asia* and *The Nation* may, after reading his current discussion, accuse him of inconsistency. He should remember Emerson's comment, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." He says on this point: "I have reversed my early position. But the change of mind has been taking place slowly and steadily for the past three years. As early as the latter part of 1937 I began to realize I had fallen into the common Western error of overestimating the Arabs. . . . The article you are now publishing sets forth the reasons which forced me to change my earlier estimate."

RICHARD M. GUMMERE, logical product of environment and heredity, is lecturer in Latin and chairman of the Committee on Admission at Harvard. By ancestry he began to teach in the late 18th century. His great-grandfather, John Gummere, an eminent mathematician, founded a boarding school and introduced chemistry and "natural philosophy" into its curriculum; his grandfather, Samuel J. Gummere, was president of Haverford College; his father, Francis B. Gummere, philologist, was professor of English and German at Haverford. . . . The author comments, "the trend toward concrete training for citizenship and a job is preferably compatible with the pupil's acquisition of a core of material which is essential—some of it traditional and some of it currently modern. As headmaster of the William Penn Charter School (1918-34) I was working on this idea."

JEAN CHARLOT was an artillery officer during the World War and as part of the French Army of Occupation in Germany became acquainted with the work of the German masters, Grünewald and Lochner, which exercised, he says very truly, a great influence over him. So, too, did Mexico, where several years later he was employed by the Carnegie Institute to carry on work in archeological reconstruction. . . . Several years ago he lectured over a period of months at the Walt Disney Studios—as those who read his "Disney Disquisition" (Summer 1939) will remember; and more recently he was a visiting member of the art department of Iowa University.

ROSCOE POUND is well-known as Dean of the Harvard Law School from 1916 to 1936 and as a fecund writer. . . . "I have two occupations which take up all of my time. One is my job as University Professor by virtue of which I am not a member of any Faculty but am authorized to teach whatever I see fit in any Faculty. The other is my work with the National Conference of Judicial Councils. In the former capacity I have been teaching my old subject of Jurisprudence in the Law School and from time to time wandering into different departments in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. This year I give a course on the history and system of Anglo-American law in the department of government and (as we used to say in the old-time bill in equity) am threatening and about to cooperate with Professor Hocking in a course in the department of philosophy. In the other capacity I published a book last summer on Organization of Courts and am now at work writing on Civil Appeals."

JULIAN F. SMITH, associate director of the Friends of the Hooker Scientific Library, says: "I am a chemist by profession and a linguist by choice. . . . As a chemist I have specialized in chemical literature.

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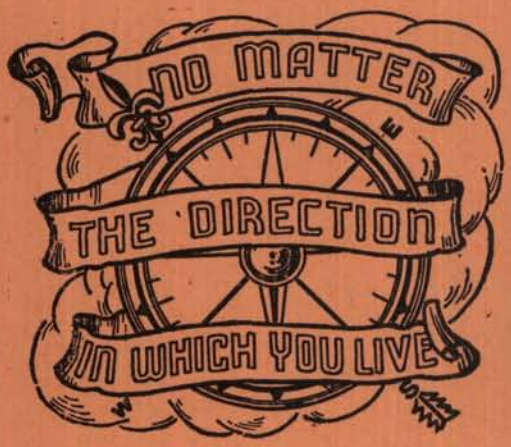

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